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Protester wails at EndSARS protest in Lekki, Nigeria (16th October 2020).

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KUJUA

Table of Contents

Cover Page

KUJUA Call for Papers: Social Movements and Protest Actions in Africa

A Note from the Editor-in-Chief
Ololade Faniyi

Conflicting temporalities in the struggle for independence in late-colonial Nigeria (1945-1960)
Immaculata Abba

Feminist Organising and Protest Activities in Nigeria: Historicizing Women-Led Movements in Nigeria (1920 – 2000)
Adebisi Adegbayibi & V. Openif'Oluwa Akoleowo

Policing, Violence and Repression Against Public Protests: Black Lives Matter Protest in Ghana
Eugenia Anderson & Ernesto Yeboah

They Came Here to Kill Us: Deixis in Select Eyewitness Accounts of Lekki Massacre
Ronke Eunice Okhuosi

Media Representation of 2020 EndSARS Protests and Social Actors in Nigeria
Chioma Deborah Onwubiko & Adeyemo David Akingbade

Two Decades of Music Activism against Bad Governance in Nigeria (1999– 2021)
Kadupe Sofola

Problematising Marxist Praxis in the Coming of Age of Postcolonial Nigerian Drama: A Discursive Critique of Soji Cole's *Embers*
Adigun Babatunde

Editor's Essay: Mapping New Routes in Nigeria's Contemporary Feminist Activisms
Ebunoluwa Olaleye

About the Contributors

KUJUA Call for Papers: Social Movements and Protest Actions in Africa

The ASSA Editorial Board, Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, Nigeria, invites submissions to KUJUA Journal Volume 2. KUJUA is a Swahili word meaning "to know". This peer-reviewed, open-access academic online journal offers an accessible platform for sharing interdisciplinary explorations from researchers and students at any stage in their research. With this issue, KUJUA is looking for submissions on a broad range of topics related to social movements and protest actions in Africa.

In the last decade, and particularly in 2020, with the implications of the pandemic, Africa experienced an upsurge in protest activities against rape and assault, police brutality, LGBT+ discrimination, school shootings and kidnaps, misogynist and oligarchical governance and more. From the END SARS protests in Nigeria to the anti-rape protests in Liberia, protests against police brutality in Nairobi, protests against the killing of school children in Cameroon, anti-corruption protests in Zimbabwe, student protests in South Africa and more, the struggles for freedom and justice are facilitated by collective action and changing faces of mobilisation. New energies, strategies and methodologies transformed protest activities. Likewise, technology, music and film, literary traditions and social media rapidly became tools to amplify and support re-imaginations of democracy, gender relations, power relations, intergenerational collaboration, and transnational solidarity. With the online and offline mobilising triggering some victories as well as narratives of repression and tragedies, this issue seeks submissions on how social movement actors have responded to Africa's multifaceted crises and the effects on varied aspects of society.

Potential topics include but are not limited to the following:

- Policing, Violence and Repression Against Public Protests
- Social Protest Actors and The Changing Faces of Mobilisation
- Outcomes/Consequences of Social Movements and Protest Actions

(Political, Individual, Cultural and Policy-Related)

- Government Resistance and Social Backlash Against Public Protests
- Implications of Governments Co-Opting Social Activism Agendas
- Effects of Social Movements and Protest Actions on Aspects of Society (The Economy, Politics, Family, etc.)
- Implications of Public Protests on Popular Support for Social Movements
- Feminist Organising and Protest Activities
- Gender Relations in Social Movements
- Transnational Solidarity and Protest Actions in Africa
- Intergenerational Collaboration Within Social Protest Movements
- Music/Performance/Literary Traditions and Public Protest Actions
- Memory and Knowledge Production in Social Protest Movements
- Overlapping of Global Power Dynamics and Africa's Crisis Issues
- Social Movements and Embedded Agency in Technology, Finance, Law, Journalism, Healthcare, etc.

Submission Guidelines

Priority Deadline: May 20th, 2021. Please send a short abstract (no longer than 300 words) and a bio (no longer than 50 words) in an email attachment to kujuajournal@gmail.com. Include your provisional title, name, contact details, institutional affiliation and type of paper submitted. Please title submissions: Lastname_shorttitle. You can find additional information about KUJUA on https://assauijournals.com.

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A Note from the Editor-in-Chief

Ololade Faniyi

Nina Simone once said, "What kept me sane was knowing that things would change, and it was a question of keeping myself together until they did" (2003, p. 167). This quote recalls the emotions and stress triggered by the series of human rights struggles at stake in our world today and how we must navigate and respond to these even as we must conserve our energies for future imaginings of change and joy. This volume was a reaction to Africa's narratives of social movements and protest actions, especially with the diffusion of domestic and transnational movements in 2020. As the continent moves into protest mode, a need is further underscored for more nuanced scholarship in African studies centred on the evolving terrain of social justice movement organising. In these pages, the contributors, a diverse mix of graduate student writers, collaborating senior researchers and activists, deliver complex submissions addressing the victories, tragedies, strategies, and peculiarities of some of the continent's largest and most disruptive collective action, using methodologies forged in front-line activism and interdisciplinary frameworks drawn from History, Linguistics Literature and Drama, Philosophy and Music.

Immaculata Abba, for example, maps the temporalities in Nigeria's late colonial struggles for independence, offering a lens to the temporal orientations of populations whose experiences of injustice inadvertently positioned them as activists and how this reflects in present-day and foreshadows an inevitable future for collective action. Abba asks, "Is the future moving towards the present or receding away from it?". Abba's question forms a great segue to the next paper by Adebisi Adegbayibi and V' Openif'Oluwa Akoleowo.

Adegbayibi and Akoleowo explore how colonial and postcolonial feminist activists inhabited gendered temporalities which were inherently personal and political, establishing the continuity of Nigerian feminist labour from

the past to the present, especially as the past is a vital precedent to contemporary feminist activism in Nigeria.

Eugenia Anderson and Ernesto Yeboah's paper presents the core of what this volume, from its inception to the workshop and this publication, tried to achieve; a synergy between scholar-activists and activists on the frontlines themselves. Anderson and Yeboah map the transnational dynamics of Black social movements, how the African continent, particularly Ghana, responds to this, and the implications of domestic activists like Yeboah being unjustly arrested for protesting, well within their rights, against police brutality.

Ibironke Okhuosi's *They Came to Kill Us* offers readers an inkling of the jarring eyewitness reports of the Lekki Massacre, which marked the anti-climatic end of the #EndSars movement decrying Nigeria's own experience of police brutality. Referring to these reports as *deictic expressions* that are inherently context-bound, she maps the practs that emerge from these reports: anger, surviving, helping, despair, amongst others.

Chioma Onwubiko and Adeyemo Akingabade turn the spotlight to the reports of some of Nigeria's independent television media on the #EndSars movement, with a particular focus on who and what is represented in their reportage. Cast against the significant roles of the media as key parties in the power play that includes the state (and its apparatuses) and activists, how the media portrayed #EndSars activists as reform-seekers, youths, destructive, and anti-education are some of the major focal points of their work.

Kadupe Sofola analyzes the music of Eedris Abdul Kareem, Sound Sultan and more, whose careers chart a seamless blend of activism and artistry as they call out Nigeria's oppressive leaders and regimes even with the consequences of doing so in an erratic democracy.

Babatunde Adigun's work appraises *Embers* by Soji Cole (recipient of 2018 Nigerian Prize for Literature) as an example of Marxist writing in Nigerian

drama that resonates with real-time lived realities of Boko Haram insurgency and activisms like EndSars and RevolutionNow. Babatunde draws us to see that Cole with *Embers* inherently foresaw the collective action that defined Nigeria's EndSars movement and its promises and perils.

Finally, KUJUA Editor Ebun Olaleye's monologue draws inferences from the KUJUA workshop plenary panel in August 2020 that featured Fakhriyyah Hashim, one of the co-founders of the Nigerian collective known for its EndSARS organising, Feminist Coalition. A wide-ranging monologue that refers to the roles of scholars and activists in documenting social movements, the politics of intersectionality in feminist organising, queer activisms within Nigeria's cis heteropatriarchy, implications of women leading social movements, the leadership of young feminists, and counter-clockwise appropriations of feminist labour and redefining of movements as feminist, Ebun invites us to think about the burden and rage but also a wealth of material for feminist scholars in the face of emerging contemporary activisms on the continent.

Reference(s)

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Conflicting Temporalities in the Struggle for Independence in Late-Colonial Nigeria (1945-1960)

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Abstract

Inspired by Walter Johnson's essay on temporality and the history of Atlantic Slavery, this paper applies a temporal analysis to the historiographical debates on anti-colonial motivations and successes/failures of various groups in Nigeria's independence movement. Its primary intention is to analyse critical events and performances of relevant actors in order to illuminate their sense of time passing between the past, present and future. The culmination of these analyses is a conclusion that the actors' sense of the relationship between the past, present and future was a significant influence in their actions and alliances. It examines the Abeokuta Women's Union, Zikists, most prominent nationalist politicians, traditional chiefs and proletarian workers employed by the colonial public service and mines.

Introduction

Both the imperial project and the anti-colonial protest movements were expressions of the future of both the British empire and Nigeria. On one hand of this tussle for the future were the colonial government and the foreign multinational private companies who faced the threat of nationalisation. On the other hand—and this is where my focus is—were political, economic and social anti-colonial groups. This paper offers analyses of historiographical debates on anti-colonial motivations and successes/failures (Coleman, 1958; Olusanya 1966; Abdulraheem & Olukoshi, 1986; Iweriebor, 1986; Tijani, 2012). However, my primary

intention is to provide more of an analysis of critical events and performances of relevant actors to illuminate their sense of the future. As a result, the essay does not delve into wider discussions on late colonial nationalism (Falola, 2001; Schmidt, 2005; Chadya, 2003), women's involvement in popular politics in Nigeria a (Matera, et al, 2012; Byfield, 2021), colonial labour (Cooper, 1996; Freund, 1997), and precolonial temporalities (Nyamnjoh, 2021). Instead, it brings acute focus to how the specified actors thought about and acted upon the question of how (quickly) independence would be achieved if at all true independence was possible.

The purpose of this is not to convince the reader that temporality was a critical factor in determining the success or failure of political movements in Nigeria, especially given the obvious significance of the more concretely spelt-out elements of their political programmes. Rather, this essay insists that the actors' sense of the relationship between the past, present, and future significantly influenced their actions and alliances.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptually, this paper draws from Walter Johnson's essay on temporality and the history of Atlantic Slavery. He argues that each narrative of slavery represents a way of being in time–a temporality–according to which historical actors (from the enslaved to the US government) made sense of the Atlantic Slavery. His essay was an intervention on the existing scholarship which tended to confine the history of the rebellious enslaved people to the present/past/future of American history when some of the enslaved themselves fought to escape from that history or imagined themselves in a different movement of time (Johnson, 2004, p. 155). Taking a cue from Johnson's work, this essay seeks to liberate narratives of anti-colonialism in late-colonial Nigeria from the confines of a colonial temporality—a linear journey towards a colonised modern progress.

Given that my focus is on the event of (coming) independence, I pay more attention to the actors' sense of the future. I use 'temporalities' throughout this essay to mean an understanding of how the present, past and future flow through time (forward? circularly? regressively?); or as Christopher Clark puts it: "a political actor's intuitive sense of [..] feeling for the motion of time." Like him, I ask questions such as 'Is the future moving towards the present or receding away from it? Is the present experienced as movement or as stasis? How does the imagined flow of time relate to the propensities of decision-makers? What is permanent, and what is not, in the minds of those who wield power?"

Using this as a starting point, this essay makes the overarching argument that the conflicting temporalities of different anti-colonial groups led them to conclude and break seemingly unusual and volatile alliances among themselves.

Period

This essay focuses on the post-World War II period of 1945-1960, which is generally known as the period of decolonisation. This period saw a change in the British empire's approach to administration in the colonies for the colonial administration. This meant that in 1945 there was a significant extension of the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts of 1929 and 1940, both initially used to fund the British Colonial Research Committee. The amended 1945 act was implemented in the midst of, partly due to anti-colonial pressures across the colonies from India to Hong Kong to Tanganyika and enabled a marked increase in infrastructural development towards modernity in colonies like Nigeria.

World War II, followed by the 1945 Colonial Development and Welfare Act, resulted in many sudden changes in the political economy of the Nigerian colony. War soldiers across the colonies returned home disillusioned at the Empire. More young people returned home from acquiring education from the West (and the East) and sought to effect

Black Internationalist and Pan-Africanist change. Nigerian peoples all over the territory protested through stories, petitions and actions against the sufferings brought in by the war-devastated economy (Korieh, 2014). This 1945-1960 period saw the first rise in numbers of a semblance of a working-class, who organised in opposition to foreign capital, which they rightfully saw as working hand in hand with the state. The incorporation of Nigeria into the European capitalist economic system via the British imperial capitalist network from the nineteenth century resulted in a capitalism in Nigeria that was not capitalist enough and a class system of bourgeoisie and proletarians and peasantry that were not bourgeois, proletarian or peasant enough by definitions and policies in the British Empire (Nwokeji, 1993, p. 49).

On the anti-colonial camp, this essay focuses on the following four groups whose actions were not always mutually exclusive: liberal nationalists, labour unions, radical political activists, women's unions and associations. These were the main actors fighting and negotiating with the British Empire and its corollaries for Nigeria's independence. Their sense of the relationship their present had with their past and future ranged from senses of time as rupture, time as continued on an ancestral plane, regressive, cyclical or linear towards an ultimate modernity. Once again, these temporalities are not to be mapped on a spectrum but appraised for the ways they overlapped and intertwined with one another. First, I will provide a summary of the colonial and capitalist temporalities on which the British imperial project and foreign multinational companies ran. Then I will assess three key moments in the period that illuminate the conflicting temporalities of the four aforementioned groups.

Colonial capitalist temporalities

The British empire was the product of a vision of modernity stemming from European civilisation as the future, a future whose past was primitivity and barbarianism embodied by Africans and other indigenous peoples. The

purpose of colonisation, then, was to save the colonised from 'the waiting room of history' (Chakrabarty, 2009, p. 8) and enjoin them into the future of European civilisation. Sociologists and other scholars of the humanities generally agree on a genealogy of the civilising mission that is traced back to Social Darwinism of the late-nineteenth century, constructions of race before that, down to the Hellenism/Barbarian binary in the Classical period. Nineteenth-century Europe was breaking with its past and charging forward to the future in search of more resources, land and markets to feed commerce expanding as a result of the industrial revolution. Modernity delivered a vision of the growth of civilisation as advancement through time: a conquest of time itself. This mesh of factors made it Europe's mandate not just to spread this civilisation but also seek out resources it could exploit to further its advancement and conquest of time.

Thus, Britain, after wars and expeditions of invasion and conquest most framed as efforts to abolish slavery and intra-fighting in Africa, established its colonial government in different parts of West Africa that eventually became Nigeria. In 1914, Sir Frederick Lugard amalgamated the Northern and Southern protectorates of Nigeria (and Cameroon) into one colony. Foreign big-capital companies such as UAC and Leventis were a significant adjacent force threading Nigerian society into the hegemonic temporality of European modernity. As representatives of industrial capitalism and commerce, these companies facilitated the incorporation of Nigeria into the European capitalist economic system. Like other African countries, Nigeria was incorporated into that system as consumers of finished goods and sources of labour and raw materials but rarely ever producers or owners of capital.

The colonial project executed in colonial Nigeria was thus administered under an interwoven complex of the temporal frameworks of European empires, Social Darwinism and capitalism. Along with foreign

capital companies, the colonial government prioritised the development of private capital and the preservation of European superiority at the expense of the Nigerian public.

In colonial Nigeria, the temporality of burgeoning European modernity was most clearly visible in the new and old urban settlements, which were repurposed as primary sites of colonial administration. Across Nigerian cities and towns in this period, colonial urban planning was designed to create physical distances between Europeans and the "native" population. Often the native population was usually confined to the outskirts of the city, and even within cities, colonial urban planning separated Africans from European living areas (usually the Government Residential Areas, positioned in strategic places like hilltops) to perpetuate the hierarchy (Livsey, 2019).

Railways, post offices and clocks became physical manifestations of a colonial presence, and they signalled a disciplining of time and time measurability that further enabled the colonial temporal regime. The British colonial government identified 'African time' in the Cape Colony as a clear culprit affecting the South African economy. It led the government to carry out intensive and extensive attempts to reform the indigenous temporality essentially labelled 'African time' through industrial training for workers and missionary-run schools for children to make time-disciplined, clock oriented African workers (Nanni, 2012, p. 10-11). Though the historiography on this problem is mainly based on research done in South and Eastern Africa, the same deductions can be made of West Africa, where similar subsistence economies existed. Urban areas were planned to represent a forward movement towards European modernity and the racial hierarchy that placed Africans behind.

This is not to argue that all spatial constructions in colonial urban

areas were in service of capitalist production and accumulation. Instead, bearing in mind the argument Lacan and Mouffe (2014) make that hegemonies are never totalising the evidence is enough to show that the configuration of space in urban areas in colonial Nigeria was a primary manifestation of European modernity and its temporality. After all, the conflicts I will discuss later in this essay mostly occur in urban spaces, where this colonial temporality was established most firmly and thus most heavily contested.

Anti–Colonial Temporalities

In arguing for a more nuanced and decolonial reassessment of the period, Ugochukwu Nwokeji's 1993 thesis argues against a binary understanding of colonialism that ascribes coloniality to foreignness and describes anti-colonialism as a single-headed movement against foreign rule (Nwokeji, 1993, p. 19-97). This paper builds on that by identifying the conflicting temporalities that enabled the differences which disprove a binary version of events.

This section of the essay looks at four key moments in the decolonisation era during which the location and shape of the future were keenly contested among Nigerian anti-colonial actors, and independence, when it came, was fraught with these different contestations. The race to the new future of an independent Nigeria was not a uniform one; some anti-colonial actors were not even in the race.

Liberal Nationalists, Workers' Protests and Radical Zikists

'It's high time!": Workers' strikes and protests

As I showed in the previous section, the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1945 was a manifestation of a change in how the British Empire envisioned its future and the future of its colonies. However, we would be mistaken to think that the changes they and foreign multinationals were making in this time were made to facilitate nationalisation or ownership of the Nigerian future by Nigerians. The

interests of capital expansion and the deep-seated view of the colonial subject as being in the 'waiting room of history' would not allow that easily.

In oppositional response to worker exploitation under British colonial rule, workers of what we might call the proletarian class across industries went on strike for 44 days in Lagos and 52 in the rest of the country between June and August 1945 (Mayer, 2016, p. 52). It involved 17 unions and between 32,600 (Hansard, 1945) and 100,000 (Falola, 2009, p. 161) government workers all over the country. Interwar depression and inflation during the years of war resulted in severe economic distress, and the petitions sent to the colonial courts attest to this feeling of 'life not worth living' that pervaded the country at this time (Korea, 2015). This occurred alongside increased taxation and the colonial government's refusal to adjust salaries to meet the cost of living, which had increased by 200% since 1941 (Padmore, 1945).

Before 1945, training by labour experts from the metropole discouraged African workers from participating or interfering in colonial politics. Likewise, nationalist leaders had not significantly acknowledged the value labour organisers could have in the anti-colonial struggle. Thus, before the 1945 strikes, labour organisers and protesters had isolated their demands for increased wages and better welfare even when they made these demands out of a specific political agenda to do with their role in society.

Even after the strikes, the workers continued to seek better wages and working conditions not as the end in itself but as one of the means to a future on their terms, free from capital exploitation from colonial and imposed native warrant chief authorities alike. For example, in Carolyn Brown's book *"We Were All Slaves",* we see how wages and working conditions for the miners in Enugu were tied to the values they placed on their Igbo masculinity and the position they occupied in their families and communities. Among themselves, the miners sold their labour-power to

one another to absent themselves from the mine to participate in farming and fulfil social obligations to their communities s (Brown, 2003, p. 95. Farming was a means for them to temper their reliance on the coal industry. For them, their past (with its cultures and economic systems) was to be kept alive in their present, and the future for them meant one in which they were able to continue performing the roles required of them as Igbo men. The dire economic conditions that led to their strike was a threat not only to their financial situation but also to the autonomy over their future which they were previously able to sustain for themselves, despite their colonial employment. However, their commitment to this autonomy meant that they did not always respond to the market in ways that appealed to employers, both state and private, to the extent that 'African' and 'worker' were considered hardly compatible concepts (Cooper, 1996, p. 56). This, therefore, distanced them from the colonial capitalist temporal regime and, by extension, the colonial state and its definitions of freedom.

Framing the 1945 Nigerian workers' protests in temporal terms risks an act of over-determination of their actions, but we can argue that their protests showed an understanding of their Nigerian future as one that was not guaranteed but rather one that had to be sacrificed for, and with immediacy rather than in a vague eventual time. The sacrifices made by the workers and their trade unions in the strike reveal their keen conviction in the possibility of a rupture from the past, a conviction in a better future to be fought for. Furthermore, they understood their opposition as both the colonial government and private companies, as both were their employers. Even after the strikes, the workers continued to seek better wages and working conditions not as the end in itself but as one of the means to a future on their terms, free from imperialist exploitation.

Zikists

Four years after that general strike, we see a comparable understanding in multi-area protests against the Iva Valley massacre when symbols of the state and foreign private capital were specifically targeted (Brown, 2003, p. 313). The Iva Valley Massacre occurred on November 18th 1949. Colonial troupes shot 87 rounds of ammunition at miners in the Iva Valley mine engaged in a sit-in to prevent a lock-out during an industrial dispute. Twenty-one miners died, and several hundred were injured from the incident. The massacre was a result of anxieties government officials had in response to increasingly aggressive tactics they perceived in some of the workers, especially the Zikists among them. Zikists were a group of young men committed to political and economic freedom across Nigeria. The anxieties of imperial state control—which led to the massacre—gave evidence to the colonial government's idea of Nigerian autonomy as still far out into the future and its commitment to keeping control over Nigeria's future.

Like the 1945 strikers, for the Zikists, it was less a question of an eventual modern future. Instead, they called for a revolution (Obi-Ani & Obi-Ani, 2010, p. 35) and advocated for an immediate and 'direct action' against colonial rule, and in so doing, they showed a conception of the future in immediate terms, requiring more immediate necessities to survive. This future was not necessarily European, and their colonial present was a past they needed to break away from. They used slogans like "Back to the land", "Boycott the boycottables", and "Africa for the Africans" and advocated for local foods, dressing, history and customs (Obi-Ani & Obi-Ani, p. 35, 37). However, the slight but telling difference here is that their vision of the future illustrates a kind of 'regressive temporality' in the way it drew strongly from memories of precolonial values and traditions, however, invented (Felski, 2002, p. 24). Their temporality, which prioritised both immediacy and

a nostalgic sense of the past, conflicted even more with the temporality espoused by the imperial project, the elite liberal nationalists and even other workers among them.

Liberal nationalists

Liberal nationalists, most of whom were part of the modernising elite, supported the strikers but mainly in protest of the colonial factor of the workers' labour exploitation and less to the capitalist factor. In 1922, the first generation of liberal nationalists formed Nigeria's first political party, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP). Its aim was:

> "to ensure the safety or welfare of the people of the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria as an integral part of the British Imperial Commonwealth […] until the realisation of its ambitious goal of a Government of the People by the People for the People." (Olusanya, 1973, p. 17)

The prevailing notion of independence as a far-off future was reflected in the writings of this new Nigerian elite. Dr Richard Akinwande Savage, in the first issue of his paper *Nigerian Spectator,* had written:

> "It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that the goal of British West Africa is to develop gradually […] until she attains in due course full representative institutions giving her dominion status within the British Empire. It will not be tomorrow, or the next day […]."(Azikiwe, 1970, p. 293)

Twenty-five years later, though of more radical energy than them, Azikiwe still wrote in the same vein of a future deferred. In a 1947 editorial on the Zikists for his paper *The West African Pilot*, Azikiwe had written with aversion:

> "But we must warn the youngsters as ever we had done, that hard work and diligent studies will fetch far richer dividends than high-sounding slogans and plans that fizzle out into a nine days' wonder." (Ebo, 1963, p. 154)

The Liberal Nationalists' vision of the Nigerian future was modern, like the Europeans. For them,

> "It was time for political ideals to be translated into practical realities. There was no need to soothe Nigerians with the promise of Canaan when they were yet in the stage of the exodus from Egypt and were wandering blindly in the wilderness of Kadesh-Barnea […]." (Idemili, 1978, p. 86)

Given that political power was concentrated in the seat of the colonial government, which was not eager to give up its control, it was more favourable for the liberal nationalists to distance themselves from a movement that wanted to compress the temporal journey to independence. The NCNC party saw a continued alliance as too costly for their ultimate goal of acceding to the seat of government.

This difference between the proletarian workers and liberal nationalists influenced the nature and extent of support given to the workers by the more powerful group of liberal nationalists whose power was accrued from their alignment with state and capital power apparatuses.

Women Workers and The Rural Elite

1949 abdication of Alake

It is widely acknowledged in the historiography of this period that the system of indirect rule was a collaborative relationship between indigenous rulers and the British administration (Idemili, 1978, p. 44). The British colonial administrators did not co-opt traditional rulers merely because they lacked sufficient personnel and funding from Europe. They also needed the traditional rulers as a matter of logistics for cultural penetration and as guarantors of labour for the colonial economy (Idemili, 1978, p. 61). Many traditional rulers in southern Nigeria had more power during the colonial period than they had in the precolonial period, particularly the warrant chiefs, whose titles were created by the colonial administration. Pre-existing powerful rulers also gained wider jurisdictional territories. The Alaafin of Oyo, the Awuiale of Ijebu Ode, the Osemowe of Ondo and the Alake of

Egbaland (Abeokuta province) are examples of rulers who empowered their economic base through the fines, tributes and taxes they collected in the name of the colonial administration (Idemili, 1978, p. 44). This collaboration especially marginalised groups such as rural informal workers and women workers.

Much of the existing literature on workers in the colonial period focused on clerical and technical industries, which were male-dominated. Even though women were present in these industries and active in their unions, the historiography represents the labour movement as a male event, makes little cognisance of women in the unions they discuss and rarely connects organising in female-dominated work fields such as the market to the organising in trade unions. Here, I focus on the conflict between the Egba market women and the Alake that resulted in the abdication of the Alake. We examine this conflict to show that the women's temporalities were at odds with the colonial temporal regime. Much like the workers of the 1945 strike, the women's temporalities gave them an understanding of the state that relieved them of illusions of independence as a rupture because of their intimacy with the embodiments of coloniality beyond specifically European figures.

Repetitive or cyclical temporalities have long been associated with women (Felski, 2002, p. 26). I am not the first to argue against essentialism in speaking about gender but in the particular case of the Alake-Egba women revolt, deconstructing and rejecting an essential feminine temporality allows us to make meaningful explorations of the ways women responded to colonial exploitation. Though their actions sometimes conformed to an understanding of time as cyclical, their protests that led to the Alake's abdication in 1949 also reveal their understanding of their moment in time as a rupture with the past that ultimately undermined the position of traditional rulers in the imagined future of Nigeria.

Initially, the Nigerian colonial government was financed mainly through import duties on liquor, but World War I threatened that source of revenue. While the Colonial office (in London) debated how to implement direct taxation as Lord Lugard had suggested to them, local officials in the provinces used their initiative. The targeted solution was sanitation fines in the Abeokuta province (or Egbaland) (Byfield, 2003, p. 255). Charges were imposed for such matters as keeping pots of water in which mosquito larvae could breed and not sweeping the front of their houses. Women living in small farm villages were the primary targets, but market women in the more urban areas were also targeted, and though the sanitation fines were illegal, their deployment in Abeokuta established women as important targets for revenue (Byfield, 2003, p. 255).

Eventually, in 1918, direct income taxation was imposed in Abeokuta. The new tax scheme and other factors such as forced labour conscription resulted in the Adubi war in which railway and telegraph lines were destroyed; and an Egba chief, a European trading agent, about one thousand Egba peasants and about one hundred soldiers were killed (Byfield, 2003, p. 255). Unlike in other parts of the country, only women in Abeokuta (and Ijebu, another Yoruba town) were taxed independently of men as officials assessed the women to be wealth traders and hoped the taxes would also give the men "a little extra hold on their wives" (Byfield, 2003, p. 257). Madam Jojoloa, the Iyalode of the Egbas (the highest titled woman in Abeokuta and historically the women's representative to the Alake), was the only woman asked about the causes of the war during the resolution enquiry. In her response, she said: "The women all complained that they derived no benefit from the government. We make no profit on the goods we sell, and yet we have been called upon to pay taxes" (Byfield, 2003, p. 260).

The story above mirrors the protests that occurred twenty years later when the officials proposed further tax increases. In 1947, the Abeokuta

Women's Union (AWU) congregated in the Alake's palace to protest the proposed tax increases and the practices of trade chiefs and tax collectors in the market. The AWU was formed in 1946. It grew out of an alliance between market women's associations and the elite Christian-educated women of the Abeokuta Ladies Club concerned mainly with teaching middle-class etiquette, over which Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti presided. The death of Madam Jojoloa, the Iyalode of the Egbas, created a political leadership vacuum among the different market women's associations. When Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti showed skill and willingness to agitate on behalf of market women, she filled that gap (Byfield, 2016, p. 123).

The protests lasted for nine months in its intensive phase, and over that time, its focus expanded beyond the tax scheme and turned to challenge power relations in colonial Nigeria. They challenged the SoleNative Authority (SNA) structure which gave the Alake the 'latitude to exercise power arbitrarily and the basis of taxation in colonial Nigeria that taxed them (women) without their representation in the local political structure. They protested in a mix of traditional (congregating in the Alake's compound to sing abusive songs) and modern methods (sending petitions and letters to the press). Mirroring Madam Jojoloa's conclusion in 1918, Funmilayo Ransome Kuti's letter 'The Women's Union Grievances' presented to the Resident of the Abeokuta Province, Mr J. H. Blair, lamented that "All Egbas [...] pay tax, but what do they get in return? Nothing whatever." (Byfield, 2016, p. 270).

The women's struggles eventually led to a temporary abolition of the flat tax on women, the temporary abdication of the Alake, changes in the Sole Native Authority system, and the entrance of women onto the local council. The colonial government was caught between its strong need and support for the Alake and how the increasing popularity of the women's protest rendered the town uncontrollable. Although some of the women's

wins were eventually overturned, the tax revolt was an important moment in Abeokuta's economic and political history with ripples in the wider national sphere.

After the protests, the AWU published a small pamphlet, "The Fall of a Ruler or The Freedom of Egbaland" (Byfield, 2003, p. 120). It was introduced with three quotes emblematic of its ethos. The first came from Thomas Jefferson and the Declaration of American Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident […]." The second from the prominent British statesman, Charles James Fox: "What is the end of government? […]" The third is from the prominent English intellectual Lord Acton: "Power always corrupts: absolute power corrupts absolutely."

Citing only these European and American theorists of secular liberal democracy, they presented their protests as a derivative of Western political philosophies. This showed their self-awareness of participating in a conflict with the colonial state as a symbol of Western political power. Instead of a passive acceptance of these philosophies, they used this new political heritage to undermine the control and excesses of coloniality. In terms of their temporality, their decision to use those quotes as a symbol showed their acceptance of the colonial moment as a rupture from their political past, a step into a different time. The women sought to inscribe themselves into the colonial temporal regime while simultaneously rejecting it as a statement of their agency and sense of historicity before colonialism. They were not interested in the resurrection of old political titles but saw themselves already catapulted into a future for which they were just demanding the full rights and obligations of citizenship that future ought to have arrived with.

From their intimacy with the failures of leadership by native Nigerians who were in collaboration with the colonial state, it is evident that they did not necessarily believe that the coming Nigerian independence would be a break with the past of colonial exploitation. In their protests,

they enacted a temporality in which they insisted on a future that was theirs claim, not to be bestowed on them by the colonial government but already in their hands. Their appropriation of those quotes, originally not made with African women in mind, was an act of inserting themselves into their vision of the future despite the ways the state rendered them invisible in the way it categorised 'workers' and political franchise. All this shows that the women's visions for the Nigerian future, including the way they saw themselves in it, were at odds with the ruling colonial temporal regime.

Conclusion

So far, I have written a history of anti-colonial organising in the period of the decolonisation era in Nigeria using a framework of temporal analysis. I began by pointing out the ways existing historiography has tended to view anti-colonial groups as operating with common interests and motivations.This essay has sought to complicate this view by examining the ways different stakeholders in late colonial Nigeria held different visions of the future and different understandings of its flow through time. Ultimately, I argued that the extent to which the temporalities of anti-colonial groups aligned with the colonial capitalist temporal regime determined the alliances they concluded and broke among themselves.

After all, these alliances had implications: at independence, power was handed to liberal nationalists in the South (and their Northern counterparts whom this essay did not examine) whose vision of the Nigerian future aligned most with that of the colonial government and its capital interests. The other groups: technical and clerical workers, Zikists, and women unions defined their past, present and future on terms that were much more at odds with the temporal terms of the Empire's civilising mission and the capitalist expansion it, and private multinationals, espoused. After independence, Nigeria continued to face several bouts of anti-government protests.

For further research, a study of comparative African contexts would shed light on the competition between 'moderate' and 'radical' nationalist parties (e.g. the UGCC and CPP in Ghana, or ANC and UNIP in Zambia) and how more temporally urgent nationalisms often succeeded in gaining power over their more moderate enemies.

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Feminist Organising and Protest Activities in Nigeria: Historicizing Women-Led Movements in Nigeria (1920 – 2000)

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Abstract

Nigeria's history books downplayed records of women's organisations of protests and similar activities, utilized in fighting various forms of social oppression and driving demands for change, leading to erasure of women activists and activisms. With particular emphasis on colonial and postcolonial women's efforts, this study brings to fore the robust involvement and participation of women in anti-colonial agitations between 1929-2000 and also examines the themes of feminism and the structure of women's movements efforts in the context of social organizations and political liberation in 19th and 20th century Nigeria.

Introduction

Throughout history, various protest movements have altered societies and the course of history in these societies as we know them. In Nigeria's case, history records, for instance, that there were a significant number of important and strong movements during precolonial, colonial and postcolonial times. Varying in ideologies and philosophies, these movements have been revolutionary, pushing for reforms of existing systems or creating those more suited to the protesters' philosophies. It is

also worth noting that these movements varied in scope; some were influential enough to gain national and international recognition, while others were limited to local policies. Regardless of what the scope was, such protests followed other protest movements and forms of socio-political organising arising due to oppression and serving as a means to express displeasure against social decay. In Nigeria's case, these protest movements resulted from a variety of reasons, primary amongst which was the issue of societal stratification, the delineation of persons into classes or groups, and the assignation of superiority or inferiority to such persons based on their membership of the classes or groups. Such stratification into superior and inferior are considered resultant effects of colonisation, which bequeathed Africans with the I and Other concepts. These concepts were given prominence, particularly where colonisers defined the colonised as 'Others' and enacted policies to control and subjugate such Others.

Globally, people are defined with various labels, 'black', 'white', 'female', or 'male'. It is important to note that these labels influence daily interactions. However, such definitions typically result in individuals who find themselves disadvantaged by virtue of the group they identify with, making such individuals victims of oppression/repression. Where such individuals recognise the injustice underpinning their continuous marginalisation, they react by making a case against such marginalisation. This could be done through various measures, including but not limited to protest activities and movements. However, resulting to protest activities and organising seems endemic to the Nigerian society as with other underdeveloped countries, where citizens suffer from a myriad of problems, poverty and hunger, ignorance and illiteracy, unemployment and underemployment, epidemics, crises, insecurities, plagues, sicknesses and death. These problems deepen the social divide(s), resulting in a high level of inequality, where individuals below the poverty line feel continually oppressed as opposed to the rich elites.

Given Nigeria's developmental challenges, its histories of social protests are numerous, despite the current dictum of 'suffering and smiling'. However, these historical recollections present watered-down versions of social protest actors and actresses by recognising only men as the primary agents in such organising. In this manner, women's efforts on matters of activisms are relegated as incidental to such protests and as relating merely to issues of social awareness and not of activism.

This 'erasure'/reductionist culture creates a deficit, especially in telling and understanding Nigeria's history properly, an activity that scholars have argued is important in aiding development. As a reaction to this, this study not only recognises the downplaying of women's roles in activism in history but also critically discusses female-led activist organisations as a contribution to telling Nigeria's history properly. It avers that women possessed and exercised organisational powers, as seen in the establishment of women-led organisations which were widely influential in colonial and postcolonial times. This study, therefore, begins by exploring the idea of social movements and organising. The study goes on to discuss five women's movements between 1920 and 2000, to highlight their philosophies, their objectives, as well as their achievements, and to examine the impact of their activism, solidarity, and leadership on the discourse of Nigerian history. While acknowledging the existence of major feminist figures outside of the listed movements, Hajiya Gambo Sawaba, as an example, we note that these other feminist figures are not included in this study given its scope, which limits it to protest organising.

Methodology and Objective

This study utilises the historical and analytical methods to access and analyse organisational records and archival documents in the exposition and establishment of women's roles as front liners and change catalysts/agents against issues of social decay, sourcing information from secondary materials as well. It is expected that a critical analysis of archival

documents will present an exposition of various women's movements and their economic, social and political activities. Chosen for their organisational skills, the influence of these movements will also be discussed to correct the distortion that has occurred over time. In history lessons, parties like Herbert Macaulay's Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) and Nnamdi Azikiwe's National Council of Nigerians and the Cameroons (NCNC) enjoyed the exposure of being at the forefront of nationalists and anti-colonial movements, even though these parties had members who were women, and whose membership was instrumental to some major wins of these parties. Likewise, there were women-led movements that made significant strides and achievements, which this study aims to put a spotlight on. Poised to tap from history, this study presents a means to examine specific women-led movements and explore hidden figures in Nigeria's colonial and postcolonial experience. In recognition of the works of feminine scholars like Oyeronke Oyewumi, Ifi Amadiume, Amina Mama, and Imam Ayesha, who have made significant contributions to the narratives historically marginalising women's groups, their identity and self-definition, this study attempts to correct the androcentric approach to major historical events and actors described in nationalist struggles, while also contributing to emerging gender studies, social movements organisation and the discourse of feminism.

The objective of this study, therefore, is a shift away from the inferior socio-political and economic positions that women have been relegated to in the course of history. This paper seeks to correct the androcentric notion of men being the sole/major agents championing nationalist and decolonisation movements in Nigeria. This is in a bid to shed light on the feminist figures involved in Nigeria's nationalist struggles, their organising power, their modes of operations and their achievements as a counter-narrative to the omission of women-led movements from the historical narratives of anti-colonial resistance and independence struggles in Nigeria.

Based on policies during colonial and postcolonial periods hindering women's active and full participation in the public sphere, women in Nigeria continue to struggle in several aspects of society, from the socio-political, economic, and academia, amongst others. However, as this study illustrates, these acts of subtle and overt resistance did not dissuade women from engaging in the overall anti-colonial and present-day independent struggles. This study is therefore of important significance as it: 1) Illustrates the presence of feminist ideologies and theorising in Nigeria's colonial and postcolonial periods; 2) Helps present the hidden figures in the history of socio-political anti-colonial and independent nationalist struggles, thereby charting a new course for historical education; and finally, 3) Draws a narrative across ethnic divides, bringing to the fore the unity and shared ideologies of Nigerian women in the struggles for liberation.

To proceed, we discuss two key theoretical concepts, feminism and women's movement and organising, for proper conceptualisation to enhance understanding.

Feminism

The word 'feminism', first coined by French socialist, Charles Fourier in 1837, was first used in 1872 in France and the United States in 1910 (Offen, 1988). Jennifer Carlson and Raka Ray have further observed that the term feminism has evolved over the years, developing in two major shifts: one, as particularising and contextualising women's different experiences, and two, as exploring what makes up oppressive gender practices, a shift away from women categories towards getting into such categorisations (Carlson & Ray, 2011). Ultimately, the feminist agenda seeks to explain issues as they affect women in their struggle to achieve gender equality with men. It embodies and exposes the challenges women face in achieving economic and political agency, as well as equality with men in political, economic, social and development areas.

Ashley Crossman defines feminist theory as a concept that can be understood in the context of being both a practical and an intellectual discussion, focusing on the social phenomena, issues, and experiences which is directed towards women, that are always covered up, from years of dominant male perception (Crossman, 2017). Feminist theory is also described as not only interested in understanding and explaining the intricacies surrounding the issues of gender inequality and roles but as one that aims to help clarify the blurred lines existing between men and women in society (Dagunduro & Adenugba, 2020). Although not referred to as feminism, studies have revealed that feminism and feminine struggles and activities have been in existence in Nigeria before being referred to as feminist ideologies today.

In feminist discourse, two central themes pervade, namely gender and patriarchy. Gender, as described by Simone de Beauvoir in her book, *The Second Sex,* is a social construct, as she states, "one is not born a woman, one becomes one". This exposes gender role formation as a social phenomenon. In feminist understandings, gender is viewed as not only the power relations between male and female but one inclusive of the contributions of society to the implementation of these relations, namely, how power has been shared between these genders (Dagunduro & Adenugba, 2020). Feminist theory often calls for the equality of sexes in terms of power and status, a central theme for feminism. It is also a response to the issues of patriarchy which has given men power and made them predominant leasers over women. Patriarchy ultimately favours the justification of male superiority over women owing to the physical and biological differences between both genders.

Feminism takes varying forms, and it cannot be encompassed under a certain definition. According to Hamzat Nauzo Abdulkadir, feminism is an ideology that seeks to promote the principles that women should enjoy equal political, economic, and social rights to that of men (Abdulkadir, 2003). James Udokang and Olu Awofeso describe feminism as both a

critique and an ideology. As a critique, it opposes patriarchy. As an ideology, it serves as a belief system, advocating for women's equal rights and emancipation from all forms of domination by men, encouraged by society (cited in Awofeso & Odeyemi, 2014). Taking note that the concept of 'equality' is also quite tricky to fit into economic, political and social struggles, this study adopts feminism as the promotion of justice in social, economic and political rights between both genders. In this sense, justice is defined in terms of John Rawls' second principle of justice: the equality principle. In this regard, the fair equality of opportunity maintains that offices, positions, should be open to any person irrespective of their social background, ethnicity, or gender. Here, Rawls argues that every individual should have equal effective chances as another of similar natural ability.

As either a form of critique or an ideology, feminism ultimately seeks to secure the political, economic and social freedom of women. Largely perceived in a negative form, feminism and feminist movements were initially stigmatised, and individuals identifying as feminists were labelled as troublemakers. However, it is more commonly known that feminism essentially seeks to promote the economic, social, legal, political, and educational rights of women.

Before the long-standing acclaimed and identified movements which are now labelled as feminist movements, there have been long forms of feminist movements in Nigeria (Madunagu, 2008). Women's organisations have been impactful across Nigeria with a goal towards ensuring the making of laws and promoting ideologies that are gender-friendly. The next section examines these organisations.

Movements and Organising: Exploring the Women's Movements

Activist movements aim to protect the rights of women. Generally, activism is seen as an intense activity or activities championed by an individual or a group of persons to achieve certain goals or pursue certain objectives, which have socio-political and economic importance.

Olukayode Eesuola describes activism as having the form of political agitation as being manifested or presented in anti-establishment or radical group actions, which are presented in the form of protests, demonstrations, rallies and also strike actions (Eesuola, 2017). It can be deduced from the above that women's movements comprise activities of an organised group of women geared towards the promotion of women. It can also be an organised activity aimed at challenging several social issues that are detrimental to the advancement of women. In feminist ideology, it is mostly used to demand the emancipation of women and combat gender disparity. Women's activist movements operate or function in many ways and employ various methods to make their demands known and met. These include protests, strike actions and demonstrations. Organising in this sense is treated as an orderly activity aimed at specific goals and objectives.

This section examines major protests and struggles for socio-political emancipation spear-headed by Nigerian women. These movements have been grouped to reflect two major timelines in Nigeria's history; the colonial (*The Aba Women's War; The Lagos Market Women's Association; The Nigerian Women's Party; and The Abeokuta Women's Union*) and postcolonial (*The Women in Nigeria*) periods.

The Aba Women's War (1929)

Described as a period of unrest from November 1929, caused by women from Bende District, Umuahia and other Eastern places in colonial Nigeria gathering to protest in the town of Oloko against Warrant Chiefs accused of limiting women's role in governance and to address social and economic grievances, the Aba Women's War has been a long time in the making (Zukas, 2009). Colonial rule in Nigeria created a disillusioned reality for the Nigerian woman. Contrary to traditional gender-fluid Nigerian societies, colonial masters created political institutions commanding authority, monopolising force and aiding in the marginalisation of women.

The political positions occupied by women were shut off, and patriarchal and masculine order was upheld to establish a moral and authoritative presence in all colonies.

Unhappy with colonial rule due to increase in school fees, corruption of warrant chiefs, and hike in taxes, the Aba women's war began as a result of the dispute between Nwanyeruwa of Ngwa ancestry and Mark Emereuwa, a man responsible for taking a census of people living in the town controlled by the Warrant Chief, Okugo. Emereuwa approached Nwanyewura and asked to take a census of her properties, humans and animals, with the aim of taxing her, despite the informal agreement that women will not be taxed. This infuriated Nwanyeruwa and led to an altercation between herself and Emereuwa (Zukas, 2009). Nwanyewura then proceeded to the town square to discuss the incident with other women who were at the time holding a meeting on the issue of taxing women. Based on the account of her experience, other women believed they would be taxed. The women in Oloko then proceeded to invite other women in the Bende District, Umuahia and Ngwa – by sending leaves of palm-oil trees. Almost 10,000 women gathered to protest at the office of Warrant Chief Okugo to demand his resignation and a trial (Allen, 1972). The protest in Oloko was led by the Oloko Trio: Ikonnia, Nwannedia and Nwugo, known for their persuasion, intelligence and passion; these three deescalated tense protest situations (Zukas, 2009).

The Women's War

The introduction of direct taxation led to the war. This was due to the enforcement of the Native Revenue (Amendment) Ordinance in April 1927 by the colonial government. Introduced a year after, in April 1928, direct taxation on men was successful due to being carefully planned out twelve months earlier. However, in 1929, when Captain J. Cook, assistant District Officer, temporarily took over the Bende division from Mr Weir, until the return of Captain Hill, he sought to revise the nominal roll, which

did not include details of the number of wives, children, and livestock in each household. This announcement made the women who had already lost their political power due to the patriarchal system under colonial rule seek to employ their collective power to communicate their displeasure. On December 2nd 1929, almost 10,000 women protested at Oloko, Bende, not only against the impending taxation on women but also on men by the acting district officer (Korieh, 2003). This protest spread to most Eastern Region in four weeks in the form of the 1929 Women's war. Led by rural women, it was organised, and their mode of operation was 'sit-in' by the women.

The protests were done on a scale that was not imaginary for even colonial authorities as one they had not witnessed before in any part of Africa. It extended over 6,000 square miles covering all of Owerri and Calabar Provinces in colonial Nigeria, with over two million people. (Gailey, n.d.). About 10 native courts were destroyed, houses of native court personnel were attacked, European factories at Imo River, Aba, Mbawsi, and Amata were looted, prisons were released prisoners, among other damages. Colonial authorities also took decisive actions, killing about 55 women. On December 27th 1929, the last soldiers left Owerri and by January 9th 1930, the last patrol in Abak Division withdrew.

Results/Influence

As a result of the women's war, there were many transformational signs of progress recorded. First, the women transformed the "traditional methods for networking and expressing disapproval", converting it to a strong mechanism that challenged and changed the methods of local colonial administration (Geiger, 1990). The protest also resulted in the improvement of women's position in society. Women were able to become Warrant Chiefs and also serve on the Native Courts. Women's movements in Igbo land also became stronger as a result of the protest, resulting in

certain events in the 1930s, 40s and 50s like the Tax Protests of the 1940s in Owerri and Calabar Provinces; Tax Revolt in Aba and Onitsha in 1956 (Andrade, 1990).

The Women's War is often described as having severe implications towards the historical dividing point in British colonial administration in Nigeria (Mba, 1984). It is also marked as important in the rise of gender ideology, providing women who were not considered elites or married to elites the means to engage in social actions (Glover, 1995). The reforms were also seen as a preamble to the emergence of African women mass nationalism (Zukas, 2009).

The aftermath of the protest also saw the emergence of Madam Mary Okezie (1906–1999) as the founder and leader of the Ngwa Women's Association, working for the rest of her life to support women's rights in Nigeria (Johnson, 1981). Even though she was not a participant in the protest, she was much sympathetic to women's cause, submitting a memo of grievance to the Aba Commission of Inquiry 1930. Till today, this memo serves as the major primary source for studying the protest and as part of the Report of the Aba Commission of Inquiry.

The Lagos Market Women's Association (the Mid 1920s)

Founded in the 1920s by Alimotu Pelewura and other market leaders, The Lagos Market Women's Association (LMWA) is regarded as one of the most powerful women's activist movements in colonial Lagos.

Pelewura's Involvement

Born in 1865, Alimotu Pelewura grew up learning and taking over the fishing business of her mother. By 1900, she was already a respected market women leader, earning a chieftaincy title in 1910 from Oba Eshugbayi Eleko and becoming the elected leader of the Ereko meat market in the 1920s. Serving as the spokesperson and women's representative in the "Ilu" Committee, an advisory council to the Oba of Lagos, she was conferred with another chieftaincy title for her advocacy of

poverty alleviation for women. Although Pelewura was an unlettered fish seller in the popular Ereko market in colonial Lagos, she maintained a close association with the National leader of the then Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), Herbert Macaulay. She was also an executive committee member of the more radical political party, Nigerian Union of Young Democrats (NUYD), in 1939, a party closely aligned with NNDP and later became a member of Oyinkan Abayomi's led Nigerian Women's Party. In the 1920s, along with other market leaders, Pelewura founded the Lagos Market Women's Association (LMWA) and was president from the 1920s -1951. During this period, she played major roles in politics and in improving the socio-economic welfare of women in the state. She was honoured with the title of "Erelu of the common people" in 1947, one of the highest honours for women in the state before she died in 1951.

Results/Influence

Politics and Agitation Against Taxation - In 1932, The LMWA led by Pelewura was able to resist the colonial government's attempt at taxing women by adopting local grassroots organising methods and also negotiating skills. The committee of women included Pelewura and other women leaders who met with C.T. Lawrence, the administrator of the Lagos Colony (Okome, 2016) and were able to resist colonial attempts to tax women.

Further, in 1940, the colonial government attempted to introduce a new taxation plan on women earning 50 pounds and above. A novelty in Yorubaland, female taxation was rejected, and the women protested against it. Not only was the idea of taxing women rejected because it was new to Yorubaland, but it was also a challenging period with economic hardship and a high rate of unemployment as a result of World War II. Pelewura was one of the prominent voices to reject this new development. Even though the majority of the over 8,000 members of LWMA did not earn 50 pounds and above, Pelewura believed this development could result in a slippery slope and an attempt towards introducing full taxation on women. While

the colonial government did not reverse their decision to tax women rather, taxable income moved to 200 pounds and above.

Price Control - Due to food shortage as a result of World War II, inflation in Lagos skyrocketed food scarcity (Johnson-Odim, 1978). To control the wartime economy, in 1941, the government introduced a flexible price control policy on specific food products subject to periodic reviews. Seeing that there was opposition and non-compliance to this policy, the government made efforts to control the sales of food using multinationals. This policy was called the Pullen price scheme, named after Captain A.P. Pullen. Led by Pelewura, market women objected to this policy. Bent on keeping the price regulation, there was a conflict between LWMA and the colonial government. Using protests, petitions, editorials, addressing Pullen directly and not cooperating with inspectors and controlled food markets, the LWMA shielded themselves politically and economically, saving their means of earning and power to operate amongst themselves and their communities, barring colonial intervention. Eventually, as the struggle continued, the LWMA was able to gain solidarity among Lagosians as a unanimous movement, and the Pullen scheme wore off, and it was never able to attain its aim of price control. The attempt at standardising and regulating the market sector (Kamm, 2016) ended in September 1945.

Pelewura was also responsible for organising market traders in support of the first general workers' strike (1945) in Nigeria. Involving over 40,000 workers, Pelewura directed traders to reduce prices, give discounts on foodstuff and provide credit in solidarity with workers.

The Nigerian Women's Party (Oyinkan Abayomi 1944)

Although referred to as the Nigerian Women's Party, the NWP influence did not expand beyond the boundaries of colonial Lagos. With this party, women's organising took a definite shape, constituting mostly elite women in leadership. It saw the appointment of the Nigerian woman

parliamentarian, Lady Oyinkan Morenike Abayomi, a leader of NWP in 1953 (Johnson, 1982). Mrs Remi Aiyedun's appointment as a parliamentarian by the Action Group in 1956 was the second time.

Abayomi's Involvement

Born Oyinkansola Ajasa in 1897, returning from her studies in Britain, she was actively involved in women's organising. Convinced that women were being cheated by men and the government, Lady Abayomi, with about a dozen other women, held a meeting that formed the NWP. The NWP aims and objectives are as follows:

> Based on their backward and unenviable position, the Women's Party makes its strongest appeal to the women of Nigeria irrespective of class or any other distinction:
> To shape the whole future is not our problem, but only to shape faithfully a small part of it according to rules laid down.
> To seek by constitutional means the rights of British citizenship in its full measure on the people.
> To work assiduously for the educational, agricultural and industrial development of Nigeria to improve the moral, intellectual and economic condition of the country.
> To work for the amelioration of the condition of the women of Nigeria not merely by sympathy for their aspirations but by recognition of their equal status with men (Johnson, 1982, p. 144).

Results/Influence

The NWP took up four major tasks—first, the issue of girls' education and the literacy of older women. Due to Lady Abayomi's influence, Queens College, Lagos, was founded, the only girls' government secondary school in Lagos until the 1950s. Until this time, the organisation continued to clamour for expansion of the curriculum, to expand women's professional options, and also, to make more scholarships available for girls and women's education. The NWP also addressed the employment of women

in the civil service. Although women gained employment due to this, they still earned lesser than the men at the time. There was also a united protest against the prohibition of women's trading and apprenticeship until the move was suspended. Finally, working alongside the LWMA, the NWP was instrumental in protecting and extending market women's rights. Overall, the party's interest in politics also laid the foundation for other women's groups to find their foothold in political parties.

The Abeokuta Women's Union (1946)

The Abeokuta Women's Union began as the Abeokuta Ladies Club (ALC), a civil, charitable organisation of Western-educated Christian women. However, as time progressed, the ALC became a more feminist and political association, admitting market women (women vendors in Abeokuta's open-air markets) (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.), who were illiterate and exploited by colonial authorities. Finally, the association became the AWU in 1946 and opened its doors to all Abeokuta women adopting as their motto "Unity, Cooperation, Selfless Service, and Democracy", with the objective of uniting women for their defence, protection, preservation and promotion of their socio-economic and political rights. The continued resistance of colonial policies by Nigerian women ushered in different activist groups for women's emancipation, equality and empowerment, with the National Women's Union (NWU) of 1947 as the first female activist group. The leading figures of the union were Olufunmilayo Ransome-Kuti and Margaret Ekpo; these two figures were among the nationalists that fought for Nigeria's independence.

Ransome-Kuti's Involvement

Born October 25th 1900 and originally named Frances Abigail Olufunmilayo Thomas, she changed her first name to Funmilayo due to her racist experiences in Britain. A Nigerian feminist and political leader, she was an advocate of women's rights in Nigeria during the first half of the

20th century. In 1946, she became the first president of the Abeokuta Women's Union. Under her leadership, the AWU became a national organisation, Nigerian Women's Union (NWU), in 1949, in conjunction with Margaret Ekpo, a fellow nationalist who fought for Nigeria's independence. In 1953, NWU evolved into the Federation of Nigerian Women's Societies (FNWS)

The Abeokuta Women's Revolt

Also referred to as the Egba Women's Tax Riot, the Abeokuta Women's Revolt was led by the AWU to stop the practice of excess and unnecessary tax collection in the late 1940s. With a combined effort of the elite class and market women and eventually the men folks, the organisation recorded enviable achievements, eventually evolving to competent, independent movements. With this development, the women had a clearer voice and raised questions on the effects of colonial taxation and other policies on women's quality of life and status. The action of the AWU also saw to the abdication of Alake Alaiyeluwa Ademola II in 1948, the first western-educated Alake who by the power of the Sole Native Authority System (SNA), created by the colonial administrators, had access to utilise the full power of the Alake as against the system of checks and balances between the Alake and his council of chiefs in precolonial Egbaland. Alake Ademola's rule was not popular as he was charged with misappropriation of land and wrongful leasing to European firms and agents. However, most of his policies were felt by women who were the main food producers and distributors, leading to a massive revolt against him championed by members of the AWU, a successful demonstration as against the general protest initially involving over 10,000 Egba citizens. 'This general protest, referred to as the Adubi War or Egba Uprising, was in reaction to the colonial imposition of taxes in 1918. It was a full-fledged mostly male-dominated war that involved 30,000 rebels and colonial troops (Yemitan, 1998).

Results/Influence

The movement first fought against price control, unfair treatment of market women and imposed taxation on women, which led to theabdication of the Alake Ademola II after the organisation's wide-led protest. The goals of the AWU were greater educational opportunities for older women and girls, enforcement of sanitary regulations and provision of health care, among other social services for women.

The Women in Nigeria (1982)

The Women in Nigeria movement came about from a study group of University Sociology and Political Science lecturers at Amadu Bello University, Zaria, in 1982. The group's activity focused on the initiation and implementation of research for the ultimate socio-political and economic emancipation of women's rights in Nigeria. During this period, the first Annual Women in Nigeria Conference was held in Zaria. It included presentations by Ayesha Iman, Bene Madunagu, Bilkisu Yusuf, Renee Pittin, Molara Ogundipe-Leslie and Therese Nweke (Madunagu, 2008). The organisation aimed to create awareness of and change in the widespread oppression and exploitation of women in Nigeria. Socialist ideology-oriented organisation was also a primary objective of the organisation. It also sought equality for men and women facing oppression in Nigeria. However, more focus was placed on the oppression of women. They also introduced class and gender dynamics in women's emancipation (Olojede, 2000). A women's organisation at inception, it also fought for the socio-economic justice of men, who accounted for about 30% of their members. This membership figure has, however, declined over time.

The Women in Nigeria movement was able to publish books and papers on their findings of the data from research on the conditions of women in Nigeria. Its first major book was Women in Nigeria, published in 1985. Since then, WIN has published other papers, including Women in

Nigeria-The First Ten years (1993), Child Abuse (1992) and Women and Violence: Breaking the Silence (Madunagu, 2008).

Feminist Themes

As earlier noted, the enumerated movements did not identify as feminist, nor did they conceptualise themselves as espousing feminist ideals. However, an analysis of these movements leads to the inevitable conclusion that while these movements and their members did not identify as feminists, their underpinning ideologies were undeniable feminist. Primary amongst the thematic underpinnings and concerns of these movements was the issue of women's rights, the ideology that women are also humans and, as humans, are entitled to the same rights and freedoms enjoyed by their male counterparts. This ideology fueled the agitations against social and financial marginalisation. Another central theme undergirding these organisations can be found in their rejection of the imposed colonial Victorian ideology of the 'docile, passive' woman, limited to the private sphere, meant to be seen but not heard. These agitations utilised traditional conceptions of economically viable and affluent women to agitate on behalf of women who were not as privileged and who were caught up in oppressive conditions due to colonial policies, witness Pelewura's agitations on behalf of the market women when rejecting increased taxation.

As such, it is not farfetched to affix the feminist label on these movements; their organisings were driven by feminist ideals of equality between sexes and the ameliorating of women's oppressive conditions in society.

Conclusion

The study has exposed the roles of women in the Nigerian society; as

active participants in the making of Nigerian history. The identified organisations revealed part of the concerted efforts made by women activists in gaining independence for Nigeria. This study, in highlighting their rejection of taxation and exploitative policies of colonial representatives and British colonial rule, has emphasised the Nigerian history of women's organising, proving in that wise that feminism, defined as a struggle for women's rights, is not alien to the Nigerian society. This we find present in the feminist ideology and activities of these groups. This study described feminism both as a critique, opposing patriarchy and as an ideology, serving as a belief system, advocating for women's equal rights and emancipation from all forms of domination by men, encouraged by society. As a critique and ideology, feminist underpinnings highlighted in the achievements of these movements include; Fight for female education; Promoting women's economic and political rights, interests and issues; Advocating for women's equal rights in the workplace, including equal pay; Speaking against feminine stereotyping and oppression. Of great import is also the fact that these movements did not limit their activist work to the female gender alone. Their advocacy also included speaking up and acting in the interest of the male gender.

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Policing, Violence and Repression Against Public Protests: Black Lives Matter Protest in Ghana

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Abstract

This paper analyses state-sponsored victimisation of social activists using police brutality in contemporary social activism as the lens of study. In addition, the role social media plays in the mobilisation of social movements is explored. Using an interdisciplinary approach, the study analyses contemporary police brutalities in Ghana especially within the pandemic year and assesses the risks social activists faced as a result of these brutalities.

Keywords: police brutality, security forces, protest movements, victimisation, social activists

Introduction

Protest movements are an important mobilisation tool, helping citizens build power to usher in major societal change, thus paving the way for an advanced democratic society. Yet, they face numerous difficulties, including hostile governments that seek to frequently quash dissent. This results in consistent conflict between social movement actors and the state. (Oberschall, 1973, p. 371). Since 1992, Ghana has witnessed both violent and non-violent protests as typified in social movement activities, including the Kumepreko demonstration, Kuffour gallon demonstration, Wahala demonstration, and the recent #Fixthecountry demonstration.

Previously, however, student movements, together with professional bodies, mobilised against the military regime of Gen. Acheampong and Flt. Lt. Rawlings which resulted in deaths, exile, dismissal, and disruption of life and property (Anderson, 2021). In these protests, there are attempts by state apparatus to continuously use violence or the threat of violence to curb civil discontent.

The importance of security to development cannot be underestimated. Sustainable peace and social progress are essential for the achievement of all the seventeen goals of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (UN SDG report, 2015). To ensure security, Ghana has instituted the National Security Council made up of the President, Vice President, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, the Interior, and Finance, as well as the service chiefs of the Armed Forces, Police Service, Prisons Service, Customs, Military Intelligence and External Intelligence (Ministry of Defence, 2005). Functions of the National Security Council include; considering and taking appropriate measures to safeguard the internal and external security of Ghana and ensuring the collection of information related to the national security of Ghana (Ministry of Defence, 2005). Formal, statutory institutions and agencies mandated to provide security in Ghana include the police, military, intelligence agencies, or para-military organisations like the Immigration Service (Badong, 2009, p. 5). They are responsible for provision of security and protection of persons and property against crime.

The paper focuses on police-civilian relations, especially on the violence the police who, in discharging their responsibilities unleash violence on citizenry despite the fact that it is their democratic right to demonstrate, using the Economic Fighters League **(**EFL) disrupted BLM vigil as a case study. The main duty of the Police Service is to detect and prevent crime, apprehend offenders, and maintain public order and the safety of persons and property (Ghana Police Act). The Ghana Police

Service was ranked 8th in Africa and 87th in the world among 127 countries around the world according to the World Internal Security and Police Index in 2016 (Commey, n.d., p. 2). This creates an impression of the essential role they play in the sustenance of Ghana's democracy. In the discharge of their responsibility, however, there are too many instances where there is the use of force leading to brutalities and violence against the citizenry they have sworn to protect. Worden (1996) argues that police use force based on the demeanour of the suspects, that is, if the suspects refuse to cooperate or are arrogant, and when suspects engage in unlawful demonstrations, riots, assembly, or similar public gatherings (p. 25-26). Yet there are instances where police violence is unprovoked. Therefore, this paper focuses on how unprovoked vigil can still lead to activities that can be perceived as security threatening and illegal and leading to violence.

Contemporary protests involve the use of both traditional activism: boycotts, riots, demonstrations, sit-ins, petitioning or lobbying and virtual activism through launching online campaigns and engaging in digital platforms (Pinckney & Rivers 2020, p. 24; Oberschall, 1973, p. 371). Virtual activism became more prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic year, where interventions of social distancing and lockdown were used to minimise the spread of the pandemic. Diverse forms of activism adopted included using cars to block roads, honking their horns and waving the national flag out of their windows, video games, and digital activism via Telegram, Facebook, and other instant messaging platforms (Pinckney & Rivers, 2020, p. 27). The study draws inference from France's "Yellow Vest" movement, Lebanon's movement against government corruption, Jerusalem's protests against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and women activists' protest against tightening abortion laws in Poland (Pinckney & Rivers, 2020, p. 27).

In Africa, one can talk of the #EndSARS Movement in Nigeria calling for an end to police brutality in the country and demanding justice

for victims of police violence and extrajudicial killings (Uwazuruike, 2020); anti-rape protests in Liberia calling on the government to declare rape a national emergency (Porkpa, 2020); the Nairobi demonstration against police brutality (Mutahi, & Wanjiru, 2020) demanding justice for the victims of extrajudicial killings in Kenya (Al Jazeera); the student protests in South Africa as a result of disparities in funding opportunities (Naidu, 2020, para 1); and most recently in Ghana the murder of EFL and #FixTheCountry activist, Ibrahim 'Kaaka' Mohammed in Ejura and the subsequent military murder of two 'Justice For Kaaka' protestors, Murtala Mohammed and Abdul Nasir and the injury of many others. A typical characteristic of state response to all these protests is the use of violence.

Drawing on the experience of the EFL at the BLMG vigil, this paper analyses policing, violence and protest against public protests - the generally accepted harbinger of social progress. This paper falls on the content analyses of online newspapers like the New York Times, eyewitness reports, ethnographic observational analysis, interviews and observations, situated in larger literature on police brutality against civilians. An analysis of the acquired data is done through the phenomenological approach to understanding the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept of police brutality (Creswell 2013, p. 44).

Theoretical Framework

The analysis of police brutalities and violence meted on the EFL and other activists in Ghana will be viewed within the lenses of Black's theory of law. Black notes that conflict may occur wherever one person has a grievance against another, wherever one person defines another's behaviour as deviant and may lead to arrests, restraining orders, suicides, thefts, boycotts, protests, revolutions, and numerous other responses (Cited in Campbell, 2011). According to Black's theory, the variation in handling conflict can be explained sociologically. Every case of conflict has a social geometry, consisting of the social characteristics of everyone involved—

such as whether they are wealthy or poor and whether they are intimates or strangers (Campbell, 2011). The Black sociological theory on police violence states that the police are less likely to take legal or coercive action on persons of lower status (poor, racial or ethnic minorities) when their accusers are also persons of lower status but are more likely to take such actions when the accusers are persons of higher status (Worden, 1996, p. 24).

This neatly highlights the issue of class struggle as already articulated by Karl Marx and emphasised by Kwame Nkrumah in 'Class Struggle in Africa' (Nkrumah, 1970, p. 63). The latter, for instance, states, "It is the indigenous bourgeoisie who provide the main means by which international monopoly finance continues to plunder and to frustrate the purposes of the African Revolution" (Nkrumah, 1970, p. 63). A sustained series of interactions between national power holders and persons successfully claiming to speak on behalf of a constituency lacking formal representation, in the course of which those persons make publicly-visible demands for changes in the distribution or exercise of power, and hack those demands with public demonstrations of support (Tilly, 2000, p. 3). In this case, one can discuss state hostilities and brutalities against the EFL and other activists as a way of limiting or restraining their social action as it casts the government in a negative light. This paper presents us with some insight into some of the reasons why the Ghanaian establishment would want to quash the EFL's action in solidarity with the American BLM movement, which is in itself against the American establishment.

The underlying factors of social conflict are necessary to understanding the phenomenon of police-civilian confrontation. Coser defines social conflict as "a struggle over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflict groups are not only to gain the desired values, but also to neutralize, injure, or eliminate rivals" (Coser, 1967, p. 232). Social conflict encompasses a broad range

of social phenomena: class, racial, religious, and communal conflicts; riots, rebellions, revolutions, strikes and civil disorders, marches, demonstrations, protest gatherings, and the like (Coser, 1967, p. 232). Common grievances, common objects of hostility, opposition ideas, and communication among the aggrieved can lead to social conflict (Oberschall, 1973, p. 371). The common assumption is that shared grievances, and generalised beliefs about the causes and possible means of reducing grievances are important preconditions for the emergence of a social movement in a collectivity (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2009, p. 24; McCarthy & Zald 1997, p. 1213). There are multiple causes of conflict in Africa: neo-patrimonialism, resource scarcity and resource abundance, sovereignty, ethnicity, religion, weak/fragile states and security structures, political and resource governance, underdevelopment, political exclusion/marginalization, religious radicalization, human rights abuses, environmental challenges and gender inequalities (Hendricks & Keïta, 2017, p. 3-4). The unsatisfactory distribution of power and resources within independent Ghana presented fertile ground for social movements such as the EFL.

The form of action chosen by social movements depends on the severity of the deprivation, structure of the political system, the level of repression, cultural traditions, democratic institutions, the existence and structure of political parties, and possibilities for direct or indirect participation (Tarrow, 1994, p. 31). The EFL's initial form of action towards the BLM cause was the use of virtual social media platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, Twitter and other instant messaging platforms (@ernestoyeboah, 2020). It provided a broader centralised platform where they could highlight issues for dialogue because the use of informative and educational infographics appeal to people's sensibilities and lived experiences (Interview with Yeboah). Typified illustrations of this are the #AccraBlackout and #BlackLivesMatter trend on digital platforms. Such hashtags were amplified

amplified to global levels and ensured alignment and solidarity with the actions of African American activists in the US (Asamoah, 2020). Prototypical protesters are rational, well-organised, professional and associated with resourceful people who undertake well-planned collective action with the goal of solving social problems (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2009, p. 25). Altbach identifies three sets of collective social actors: a tiny minority core leadership, well-informed, active followers, and a much sympathetic larger group of followers (Altbach, 1966, p. 102). The spread of information and networks are essential elements of mobilisation, which has a profound impact on the dynamics of contention (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2009, p. 19). The ELF leadership and membership is tiny, and mobilisation is mainly through social media platforms.

A Historical Overview of Policing and Violence against Social Movements in Ghana

In most cases of confrontation between the social groups and the police, the latter usually exercised minimal restraint leading to deaths, injury, property loss and a general sense of insecurity. In Ghana, one can refer to pro-democratic social movements such as the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS), the Ghana Bar Association (GBA), the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG), the Catholic Bishops Conference (CBC), Movement for Freedom and Justice (MFJ), and the People's Movement for Freedom and Justice (PMFJ) (Ninsin, 1998, p. 51). Most military governments in Ghana, in order to attain some form of legitimacy to their regimes, tried to court populist support. The 1966 counter-revolutionary rebellion together with the 1972, 1979 and 1981 coups led by the National Liberation Council (NLC), National Redemption Council/ Supreme Military Council I/II (NRC/SMC I/SMC II), Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), and Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) gave the military some form of legitimacy due to the seeming support of diverse social actors such as Trade Union Congress,

NUGS, ARPB, GBA, market women, and trotro1 drivers (Nkrumah, 1967, p. 43; Chazan, 1983, p. 23-69; Oquaye, 1980, p. 3; Boahen, 1975, p. 222; Lentz, 2017, p. 563). This seeming support did not last long due to socio-economic and political abuses the masses suffered under these regimes.

Using Black's sociological theory of law in the prediction of police behaviour that the police are more likely to take coercive action on people with lower status when the influence is coming from people of higher status, there are several instances where the state apparatus hide behind the police/military to mete out violence against the oppositional citizenry. The Union Government agenda of the Acheampong regime was opposed by dissident social groups including GBA, GMA, ARPB, NUGS, PMFJ (Oquaye, 1980, p. 67-69; Adjei, 1993, p. 287). They consistently held press conferences where they called for the immediate resignation of the Head of State and a lift on the ban on political parties (Oquaye, 1980, p. 62-63; Chazan, 1983: 246). In 1977, during a Workers' peaceful demonstration on University of Ghana campus, Mr Mikki Abbas Abdelsalah, a Sudanese postgraduate student, was shot dead (ARG2/13/1/42a; Chazan, 1983, p. 246). Citing allegations of violence against civil society, NUGS noted that Dr Kwadwo Amoah, a Ghanaian scholar abroad, published a pamphlet, 'The hour of Truth-A Call to Col. Acheampong to hand over Power to Civilians', after which he was arrested and detained. Da Rocha Jr., who was suspected to be engaged in subversive activities, was arrested and tortured with his nails removed, ribs smashed in, testicles crushed, back burnt until he died. The same with Ebenezer Allotey, who was arrested on 3rd March 1976 and Samuel Owusu Smith, a student of Kumasi Technical Teachers college, beaten till he died. Another student was arrested on the 22nd May 1977 for putting up posters along some streets of Accra (RG3/6/873; UG1/3/7/4/27B, *Daily Graphic*, 14th May 1977). These groups questioned the legitimacy of the Acheampong/Akuffo regime until it was overthrown by the AFRC in 1979. Similarly, the PNDC period of honeymoon ended as

a result of the murder of the three judges. The Workers Defence Council and People Defence Committees were used to intimidate professionals to realign the attitudes and concepts of society to that of the revolution (Oquaye, 2004, p. 143-144). UTAG, ARPB, NUGS demanded a road map to a return to democracy even in the face of vehement opposition (UG1/3/7/4/27E). Through their contribution to the Consultative Assembly, the 1992 Constitution was birthed (Sapong, 2014). In the Fourth Republic, one can use the Kumepreko demonstration against the high cost of living, particularly the introduction of VAT, as a typified example of the unleashing of state violence on protesters resulting in deaths and detrimental injury to protesters (Today in History**,** Ghanaweb).

The Economic Fighters League and The Black Lives Matter Movement

The Economic Fighters League is a Ghana-based Pan-African Movement that aims at mobilising people of grassroot to ensure economic freedom. They argue that the battle of the 21st century is a battle for economic freedom because, as a country, Ghana is blessed with enough materials and human resources to ensure a quality life for all (quality education, health, shelter, food). Yet resources remain in the hands of a few due to insatiable greed and mismanagement, foreign control of the economy while the majority of Ghanaians wallow in poverty. They argue that the two main political parties (National Democratic Congress and New Patriotic Party) are dysfunctional parties who use their position to amass wealth to the detriment of the masses. They also emphasise political exclusion due to the monetisation of politics that ensures that the masses remain marginalised (EFL Brochure).

Its membership, mainly the youth, are people from different political, economic, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. To ensure change, the EFL uses a four-pronged approach to create political consciousness: political education, activism, livelihood development, and mass mobilisation. The Fighters seek to defeat the system which favours a few at the expense of

the masses while advocating for economic democracy, Pan-Africanism, peace and justice for all (EFL Brochure). It is, therefore, in this light that they added their voice to that of the Black Lives Matter movement after the murder of George Floyd.

The #BlackLivesMatter movement was inaugurated by the black female activists Alicia Garza, Opal Tometi, and Patrisse Cullors after George Zimmerman was acquitted for the murder of Trayvon Martin, an unarmed black teenager, in Florida in 2013 (Cobb, 2016). Its membership increased exposure to systematic police violence against black citizens. This movement expanded in membership following the acquittal of Darren Wilson and Daniel Pantaleo by two grand juries for killings of Michael Brown and Eric Garner, respectively, in 2014 (Clayton, 2018, p. 454-5). The BLM encourages purposely disruptive protests, peaceful civil disobedience, mainstream political activism, and mass demonstrations, among other things (Linscott, 2017, p. 76; Altman, 2015). At the height of the first wave of covid-19, George Floyd, a 46-year-old African-American man, was killed after being handcuffed and pinned to the ground by Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, on May 25 2020 (Taylor, 2021, para 2). After Floyd's murder, protests erupted in cities across the United States and spread to the rest of the world. It is estimated that about 15 million to 26 million people in the US have participated in demonstrations over Floyd's death (Buchanan, Bui & Patel, 2020, para 2). His murder was linked with the untold misery slavery wrought on the African American race through the legacy of systemic racism and discrimination against African Americans (Clayton, 2018, p. 449). This led to an expansion of the BLM movement beyond the US to encompass other countries in the world.

Floyd's murder erupted a rapid African response from Uganda (Neilsen, 2020), Senegal (WION, 2020), Gambia (garda, 2020), Kenya (Nyabola, (2020), South Africa (Africanews, 2020) and Ghana (BBC, 2020). The African response to BLM was significant for a number of reasons.

Beyond the obvious links in terms of heritage was the very real violence that Africans across the continent face daily at the hands of security forces. Campbell notes that the issue of the use of excessive force on citizens in Africa "is an old song, and reform is difficult" tracing their origins and orientation from their colonial past (Campbell, 2020). Across the African continent, civilians were being harassed, assaulted and murdered by various state forces under the pretext of enforcing COVID safety protocols. The BLM cause clearly found resonance in many African societies, including Ghana, where new 'repressive' legislations and legal instruments were tabled and passed in an effort to use the pandemic situation to justify the attempt to control civilian freedoms (Imposition of Restrictions Act, 2020). On 22nd March 2020, the President passed the Imposition of Restrictions Act, 2020 (Act 1012), which imposed restrictions on public gatherings, including conferences, workshops, funerals, festivals; political rallies, sporting events and sporting clubs, private parties and other social gatherings, night clubs, drinking spots and event centres, and religious activities in churches, mosques, shrines and at crusades, conventions, pilgrimages and other religious gatherings; and travel to and from Ghana (El 64, p. 2-3).

In the week after the murder of George Floyd, the EFL issued a statement in which they condemned the silence of African leaders on the issue. They noted,

> We condemn the silence of African Leaders over this murder and in particular the persistent racist attack against black people in the US in general. It is important to remember that the George Floyd incident is not an isolated event: it is reflective of the system that has suffocated black people across the world for centuries. It is not just in America. In China, our brothers and sisters continue to suffer racist harassment. African leaders have been engaging in oppression of our people in mainland Africa; economically, politically, culturally et cetera. Everywhere you turn, black people are under siege (EFL press release).

Amid this statement, the Ghanaian President, Nana Akufo-Addo, the following day tweeted condolences, and the Ghana Tourism Authority quickly moved to organise a closed memorial on June 2, 2020, at the W.E.B. DuBois Centre in Accra (@NAkufoAddo). Diasporan African Forum, together with the #Beyondthereturn and @yearofreturn team, empathised with the African American community in a tweet (@yearofreturn). However, it was mentioned in some diasporic circles that there was the need to apply pressure on the government before the statement and the memorial were organised (Anonymous source). Nevertheless, the public displeasure was quickly quashed by the memorial service and an aggressive campaign absolving the president for his perceived initial lack of interest, especially on the back of the much-publicised Year of Return and the following Beyond the Return, which sought to encourage diasporic investment in Ghana by rolling out the welcome mat for black Americans who seek to extricate themselves from discrimination (Paquette, 2020, para 6). In this initiative, the government has negotiated with local chiefs to earmark 500 acres of land near Accra, carving out enough space for about 1,500 families. Akwasi Agyeman, chief executive of the Ghana Tourism Authority, noted, "We want to remind our kin over there that there is a place you can escape to." Barbara Oteng Gyasi, Ghana's Tourism Minister, also noted, "We continue to open our arms and invite all our brothers and sisters' home …. Build a life in Ghana. You do not have to stay where you are not wanted forever." (Paquette, 2020, para 6). Floyd's death reopened the conversation on systemic racism and calls for the restoration of the dignity and respect of black people all over the world. George Floyd's name has been permanently mounted on the wall of the Diasporan African Forum at the W.E.B. Du Bois Centre in Ghana's capital, Accra (BBC, 2020). In addition, a funeral service was held in the slave tourist site at Assin Manso in the Central Region to identify with the ongoing world event.

Accra Blackout[2] - A Black Lives Matter Vigil in Ghana

It was in the wake of this global outcry for justice for George Floyd that on June 6, 2020, the EFL organised the Accra Blackout vigil at the Black Star Square in Accra to express solidarity with uprisings against police killings of African Americans in the United States after the brutal murder of George Floyd. The solidarity vigil was meant to: make a bold statement for the restoration of the dignity and respect of African Americans and all black people, indicate local instances where black lives were not respected in Ghana and demand for the institution of better governance structures and accountability (Interview with Yeboah). They also sought to honour Ahmaud Arbery, an African-American man who was shot dead at point-blank range while jogging in his neighbourhood in 2020 (BBC, 2020). Tied in with the BLM vigil were local issues. First was the unsolved abduction of three girls from Takoradi in 2018. Sam Udoetuk Wills, a suspected Nigerian kidnapper of the three girls in the Western Region, was purported to have escaped from police custody aided by an officer of the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) on 30 December 2018, though he was later re-arrested in Nkroful near Takoradi (Allotey, 2019, para 1). In addition, during the COVID-19 lockdown Eric Ofotsu, a homeless man with mental health issues, was gunned down by a military officer enforcing lockdown protocols. This action and other acts of highhandedness by security officers were issues raised by the EFL (Africaproactive, 2020).

Approximately eighty people attended the peaceful vigil at the Blackstar Square Accra, under the 100-person limit required by the COVID-19 Executive Instrument issued by the president (El 64, p. 2-3; Korankye, 2020). Protesters held placards that read, 'Africa Must Unite', 'Black Lives Matter', 'Police Brutality = Colonial Violence', and 'Justice for George' (BBC, 2020). The peaceful vigil was disrupted by the security forces comprising the police, soldiers, and national security operatives (Interview with Yeboah). It turned violent after

the security forces fired bullets into the air to disperse the crowd and arrested EFL Leader Ernesto Yeboah. Other protesters were injured in the process. Kuukua Eshun, one of the protesters, states that she fell and injured her elbow during the clash (Interview with Eshun). Yeboah was charged with failing to contact the authorities before organising the vigil. Yeboah spent over 24 hours in police cells before he was released on a bail surety of about 15,000 Euros (Dantzig, 2020, para 4). He was subsequently subjected to a 9-month trial in an Accra Circuit court (Interview with Yeboah).

The violence perpetrated against the vigil attendees attracted local and global condemnation. Individuals and organised bodies began to show support for Yeboah, making public statements, circulating petitions and entirely covering the legal costs (Interview with Albie). The backlash against the government grew after the arrest; scores of demonstrators chanted 'Free Ernesto!' outside the police station where he was being held. The incident escalated when the counter-terrorism unit fired live ammunition in an effort to disperse protestors who had gathered outside the Greater Accra Regional Command Police Station, causing the crowd to break out in disarray (Adamu, 2020). The Ghana Caribbean Association, the All African People's Revolutionary Party, African Diaspora Alliance, African People's Liberation Movement, African Students & Empowerment Group (ASEG-UCC), African Youth Improvement Foundation, Africans for African Unity, Black Lives Matter, Kwame Nkrumah Ideological Institute, Pan-African Community Action, Pan-African Students Congress, RasTafari Council of Ghana, Slum Union of Ghana, Star Black Foundation, Young Roots International and a number of other movements sent solidarity to the EFL movement and its leader. In a letter to the president, these aforementioned movements condemned the prosecution of Yeboah. They noted, "Many in the Ghanaian community see the continuing pursuit of this criminal case as an attempt to deter any future

public expression of a similar nature. Others have said that it is an exercise intended to reinforce the power of the police" (Open letter to H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo Addo). The act of solidarity expressed by the EFL for Black Lives came full circle when 9 months into the case, a group of eight BLM chapters issued a statement condemning the continued persecution of Yeboah, noting,

> On June 6, 2020, the Pan-African organization Economic Fighters League (EFL) organised a vigil in Accra, Ghana to express solidarity with uprisings against police killings of Black people in the United States after the brutal murder of George Floyd. The action, which was organized to show support for Black Lives Matter, was violently disrupted by Ghanaian police, who fired bullets into the air to disperse the crowd and arrested EFL Leader, Ernesto Yeboah. Now, Ernesto is standing trial for organizing this solidarity action and may be sentenced to one year in prison if he is convicted. We refuse to allow this to happen. We condemn in the strongest terms the criminalization of protest by the Ghanaian government, which presented itself as a safe haven for African people of the Diaspora during the Year of Return and continues to promote itself as a protector of Pan-Africanism. Criminalizing acts of Pan-African solidarity does not fall in line with this tradition (Statement released by BLM).

It was after this press release by the BLM that on March 15, 2021, the prosecutor, Chief Inspector Emmanuel Haligah, told the court that the State was no longer interested in pursuing the charges against Yeboah without offering the accused any tangible reason for doing so (Ullo, 2021). The action by the government brings to bear the question of hypocritical conformity in democracy (Gastner *et al,* 2019; Gais, 2020). Did the government, who was supposed to represent the people act in the good will of the people or for its own parochial interest?

Conclusion

The state-sponsored victimisation of activists remains a consistent part of protest movements' interaction with the state. In contemporary times, digital activism, especially the use of social media platforms combined with traditional activism, presents the state with an insurmountable challenge because it swiftly exposes instances of human rights abuses and easily mobilises activists from different parts of the world. Social media creates a centralised platform for dialogue and sensitisation.

Tilly notes that a social movement is a "deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution and withdrawal into 'utopian' community" (Tilly, 1979, p. 5). The engagement of protest movements with state security agencies is never without violence. The reaction of the state to the BLMG vigil organised by the EFL movement presents a very ironic instance because the government of Ghana showed solidarity for BLM in the US while suppressing an act of solidarity in Ghana. It also reveals the failure of the state to protect its own citizens against police violence and brutalities. It exposed the inconsistency of the government in its Pan-Africanist agenda and called for the unification of the Africans in Africa and people of African descent. Using Black's sociological theory on police violence, this paper has analysed how the police are more likely to take legal or coercive action on persons of lower status because their accuser is the government in power or persons of higher status. It also indicated a similarity in state violence against protest movement mobilising in both the US and Ghana.

Notes

1. Minibus taxi in Ghana are called *trotro*
2. Accra Blackout, the EFL vigil held in solidarity with BLM of the United States.

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They Came Here to Kill Us: Deixis in Select Eyewitness Accounts of Lekki Massacre

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Abstract

The Nigerian youths took to the streets to protest systemic police brutality in 2020, but the government violently clamped down on these peaceful protesters on 20th October. This paper investigated the pragmatic acting of the deictic elements in eye-witness reports from two of the protesters. The narrations project the reporters as social actors in solidarity with other protesters to rebel against the repression meted out by the otherness represented by the government, soldiers and other parties.

Keywords: Deixis, Special Anti-Robbery Squad, Pragmatic Acts, Lekki, EndSARS

Introduction

Adapting well to adverse situations is one of the characteristics that have been used to describe Nigerians; this is, however, arguable. This label holds more negativity than positivity and has heightened government maltreatment of Nigerians, which is evident in their enactment of unfavourable policies, lack of commitment to statutory duties, nonchalance towards people's constitutional rights, blatant irresponsibility concerning the plight of the different sections of the populace, and a myriad of other issues. In the face of all these and many more, Nigerians remain resolute in their endless optimism for a near-utopian world. This hope is continually fuelled by their religious affiliations and cultural belief systems. Thus, rather

than make demands of the elected government, they expect an intervention of the Deus ex machine to mitigate the problems miraculously.

In light of the preceding, the online and physical nationwide protests against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) of the Nigeria Police Force took the country and the world by surprise. Although there had been a clamour for the termination of this unit before, 2020 recorded the first nationwide synergised protests against the human rights-violating group of police officers who ironically and at the very least perpetrated the very same crimes they were instituted to combat.

In the wake of this renaissance, several studies emerged to investigate the protest from economic, legal, technological and linguistic perspectives. This created more awareness and awakening about Nigeria and her plight in academia. However, no one envisaged the magnitude of events that reportedly unfolded at Lekki toll gate on the 20th of October, 2020, where the Nigerian Army shot at protesters, killing some and injuring many more. This incident brought Nigeria and Nigerians to a grinding and shocking halt, both home and in the diaspora. Eyewitness accounts of this incident have been released on the internet, and the use of deixis is quite outstanding in portraying the victims, predators and killing site. Therefore, this study investigates these deictic elements in the firsthand experience of two protesters at the grounds, using Jacob Mey's 2001 Pragmatic Acts Theory as a theoretical framework.

Literature Review

Following the anti-police brutality protest, several studies have emerged to investigate the event from several standpoints and different parts of the world. Husted (2020) writes for the United States Senate that the Nigerian government's response to the protests could affect the professional training ties between the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and the US – this connection could either be severed or intensified. Husted (2020) states that although there is uncertainty about SARS' participation in previous US-organised

series of training for the country's police, the degree of their abuse of power would decidedly determine whether the connection is maintained or not. Husted rightly writes that the October 2020 crackdown on unarmed civilians is not the first assault that the Nigerian military had perpetrated against citizens, referring to the treatment of the Shia Muslim sect in 2015 when they gathered to protest the unlawful detention of their leader, Sheikh Ibraheem Zakzaky. There are also allegations of mass executions, random detention and torture by the army without any recourse or human rights charges laid against them. All these show that the US government is as involved and knowledgeable about the goings-on in the NPF as much as the Nigerian government itself. As much as international aid is always welcome by any third world nation, the salient question to be asked is if it should involve a country's police force. Nevertheless, the effect of these collaborations is non-existent.

Before the national protest, Amnesty International already averred that SARS officers were torturing and committing inhumane crimes against arbitrarily arrested and detained people who were compelled to confess to crimes they did not commit as an alternative to bribing the officers for their freedom (Amnesty International, 2016). In the same vein, Uwazuruike (2020) provides saddening descriptions of the torture techniques SARS officials employ in dealing with their victims. Further, he suggests possible reactionary steps that the Nigerian government can take to ameliorate protesters' grievances adequately. These are to disband SARS, ensure restitution for victims, tackle the organised abuse by all government agencies, train all law enforcement officers in human rights matters, regularly appraise officers regarding human rights compliance, and prosecute erring officers with the gravity their offence deserves. As laudable as Uwazuruike's (2020) suggestions are, they lack a fundamental premise which is that officers who have already erred should face the punishment for their actions because an absence of this is equal to injustice, regardless of the attempts at restitution for the victims.

During the EndSARS protests, the president of the Nigerian Bar Association stated the association's contrary stance against the inhumane treatment of Nigerians by the NPF. He demanded the immediate and unconditional release of the detainees who had been held incommunicado for days or that they be charged before courts of competent jurisdiction. Mediums were also put in place to ensure compliance with this statement (Akpata 2020). Despite these, many were still held against their will, days after the release of this bulletin. This event shows how lowly the judicial body is regarded in Nigeria.

ACLED (2021) reports that the situation, protests, the reaction of the government and police have heightened the youths' mistrust of them, mainly because, relative to other demonstrations occurring around the world, Nigeria experienced a high excessive force against protesters by 10%, despite the peaceful front that protesters presented. Thus, the government's proposed panel of inquiry has been met with many misgiving by Nigerians. This mistrust and misgiving are also fuelled by previous disbandment and seeming caution of SARS but with no actual results. And at the peak of protests, the government turned on #EndSARS pro-individuals and businesses, accusing them of sponsoring terrorism. On this accusatory ground, many people's bank accounts were frozen for a long time.

Ochi and Mark (2021) studied the impact of the protests on Nigeria's economy. They submitted that the unexpectedness of the protest on an economy already on the brink of recession in the face of oil devaluation and the COVID-19 pandemic caused a lot of unforeseen crises. They further report that the impact of closing Lagos for three days at a stretch reverberated across the nation's economy because it controls about 50% of the country's economy. Although the aim of the study is relevant, its findings do not contain information newer than what already exists in its literature review.

Furthermore, Ekoh and George (2021) state that digital technology has dramatically changed the face of protest, as seen in the EndSARS protest. They report that this is made possible because of the possibility of getting authentic videos, audio and other proofs in real-time. Their claim is very valid as what prompted this wave of protest is indeed a video of SARS' extrajudicial activities, which went viral. Specifically, this video showed a SARS official shooting a young Nigerian and making away with the victim's vehicle. The video made the rounds on social media on Saturday, 3rd October 2020 (Okon, 2020). The populace's discontent was aggravated through other videos, experiences and testimonies shared by victims online. This paper paints a picture that technology is a novel ingredient in the success of protests worldwide, whereas the novelty of it is limited to Nigeria. This is because the benefits of the world of technology have been engaged for a long time around the world now, even in protests. An excellent example of this is the Arab Spring.

Dambo, Ersoy, Metin, Auwal, Olorunsola, Olonode, Arikewuyo and Ayodele (2020) investigate how Nigeria's political milieu has hindered the online movement for EndSARS, limiting its success, unlike the unprecedented success that was recorded for the Arab Spring in the Arab world in the 2010s and the BringBackOurGirls movement in Nigeria. This study reports the supporting and opposing sides of the EndSARS movement. The paper sheds more light on how online activism can birth 'slacktivism', a kind that brings no (re)solution. The paper draws a connection between Nigeria's political and cultural background and the inability of the "Twitter generation to successfully advance social change through connective action, unlike patterns evident in the "Arab revolution". The study concludes that Nigeria's EndSARS physical protests are still more effective than virtual ones, although even these physical ones recorded very minimal success because of Nigeria's delimiting political environment. The researchers provide a salient suggestion:

> The peculiarities inherent in African democracies and anocracies should be considered important factors for social movements. This will give rise to new strategies for emerging activists to consider when pushing for change. (p. 8)

The preceding shows that the EndSARS protest, though demanding an end to police brutality, affects several other areas in the country's affairs. Although the counter-activities of the government and pro-government agencies have caused unimaginable havoc, there are shreds of evidence of this highly violent treatment of protesters, and this is made available to the global public through digital technology. These proofs provide a new level of insight into the protests, and there is yet to be enough investigation of this data. Therefore, this study set out to examine the deictic elements in the eye-witness accounts of the Lekki protest-turn-massacre.

Deixis

Deictic expressions are words used to represent or replace people, places, things, time, or subjects mentioned above. They are so context-bound that as their contexts change, so do their meanings and referents. In other words, their meaning derivation is always connected to and dependent on the context in which they exist. Levinson (1983:54) refers to deixis as a "phenomenon wherein understanding the meaning of certain words and phrases in an utterance requires contextual information." Similarly, Yule (1996) describes deixis as words used to point out and identify people, places and times of events. In a statement like *they came here to kill us,* the complete comprehension of the statement cannot be grasped until the reader gets the complete information about the context of its utterance. It is only then that the readers can know who the speaker is, whom they are referring to and where the action is taking place. Thus, "they", "here", and "us" are instances of deictic expressions.

Dexis is subsumed within pragmatics because it is connected to language and context of use (Stapleton 2017). Dexis is also called indexicals by philosophers (Levinson 1983; Yule 1996).In light of the types of phenomena that deictic expressions represent, they are classified into a person (I, we, she), spatial (here, there, this), and temporal deictic (now, then, yesterday) expressions. However, Levinson (1983) Fillmore (1971) added two more which are social and discourse deictic expressions (Stapleton 2017).

Person deixis can be first, second or third person, depending on who is speaking, listening and who or what is being talked about. It can also be a subject or object. Spatial deixis allocates the entities into their respective spaces to show where they exist (for instance, here, there, this, that). Yule (1996) identifies psychological distance where unwanted entities are mentally distanced, thus describing them as physically distant. Temporal deixis refers to the words used to denote the time of an occurrence (at dawn, in the morning, every day). Apart from the traditionally recognised deixis, the other Levinson-initiated deictic expressions are social and discourse deixis. Social deixis refers to the relationship between the speaker, hearer and object of discussion. Discourse deixis makes a backward reference to an entity that has been talked about or a forward reference to an entity that will be talked about (for instance, earlier, later) (Stapleton 2017).

Apart from giving information about time, place and participants in a speech event, deixis also provides details about the relative distance between speakers and objects in a context. Thus, proximal deictic expressions are used to refer to items or events close to the speaker (for instance, here, now, this), and distal deictic expressions are used to show that the entities being referred to are distant (for instance, there, that, then) (Stapleton 2017).

Theoretical framework: Pragmatic Acts

Pragmatics is an offshoot of J.L. Austin's Speech Acts theory, where words are described as being used to do things. Unlike Speech Acts, however, Pragmatic Acts makes adequate provision for context. Meaning deduction of both speakers and hearers alike is not restricted to the words; instead, context provides a broader avenue to make more deductions fuelled by background information, socio-cultural experiences and beliefs, prosody, emotions and so on (Mey 2001). Thus, without stating a speech act outright, the combination of these subtle language nuances can project a rich meaning to hearers and readers. All these provide a 'setting up' for appropriate meaning derivation. Mey (2001) specifically distinguishes pragmatic acts from indirect speech acts, which involve using a commissive to project an assertive act, for instance. Rather, while an indirect speech act is a pragmatic act, a pragmatic act is not always an indirect speech act. Also, a speech act in context is a pragmatic act, but a pragmatic act is not always a speech act.

Pragmatic acts can be considered from the agent's perspective and the act. Some traits and characteristics pertain to the agent and contribute to meaning derivation from a speech event. Examples of these are cultural background, personality, age, experience, gender, education and so on. The act, on the other hand, concerns the language that is used. Thus, in the derivation of a pragmatic act, that is, a pragmeme, there are two central aspects – the interactants' activity part and the text part itself, illustrated by Mey (2001) in the figure below.

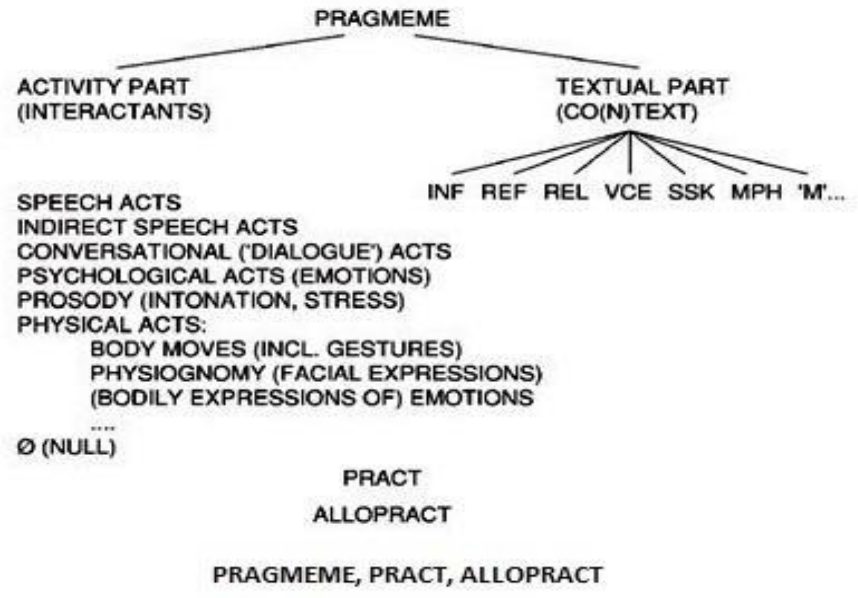

Fig. 1 Pragmeme

An instantiated individual pragmatic act (pract) is called a pragmeme. What serves as a pract is not grammar-based at all. Instead, it is based on the understanding that speakers or participants have of a situation and its effect(s) on the situation. Different manifestations of a single pract are called allopracts. The realisation of a single pract is based on the schema above in figure 1, where the activity part of the interactants, on the one hand, can involve (indirect) speech acts, conversational and psychological acts, prosody, body movements, facial expressions, or even silence. The text, on the other hand, can reflect inf(erence), ref(erence), rel(evance), voice, shared situational knowledge, metaphor, metapragmatics and so on. The combination of these and the meaning deduction from the combination culminate into a pract.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive design. A purposive sampling technique was used to select five eye-witness accounts of the events that transpired at the Lekki toll gate protest ground on 20th October 2020. These accounts were culled off the internet (YouTube). One account is from Serah

Ibrahim's testimony at the Lagos Judiciary Panel of Inquiry, two are from Obianuju Catherine Udeh (DJ Switch) in an exclusive YouTube video and an interview, and two are recordings of the events as recorded live on Instagram. The data were subjected to perceptual and theoretical analysis, using Jacob Mey's Pragmatic Acts.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data is done strategically by identifying the practs in the data and establishing the activity part of the interactants and the textual parts, which are simultaneously responsible for the construction of each pract. This is done while paying close attention to the deictic expressions as used by the interactants. The data contains nine practs, which are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs. As much as possible, the practs are discussed chronologically as they occur in the narration to keep to the plot of the accounts.

1. Pract of (fore)warning

A curfew was slated for 4 pm on the 20th of October 2020, and the data shows that the protesters forewarned one another about a possible invasion by hoodlums. There is a reference to the actors in this enactment using a first-person plural deictic expression (we) for solidarity with the other protesters. The inference is also used in the narration to project the protesters' suspicion that the whole essence of the curfew is to allow hoodlums to invade the protesters and their space. To prevent such occurrence, the data shows that the protesters clear the area of potential weapons. This 'joint' effort is shown through the first person plural pronoun as a deictic instance. Apart from this, there is also an attempt to present a dichotomy between protesters (we) and the government and hoodlums (they). This happens throughout the data. There is another inference that the government (they) has enforced the curfew to encourage hoodlum attacks.

> …Cos **our** thought went to the fact that possibly, hoodlums and thugs would want to come and attack the peaceful protesters, which is why **they** are putting the curfew, so **we** thought that the curfew is made for the peaceful protesters so that the thugs can have opportunity to clamp down on **us**.
>
> Serah Ibrahim

The pract of forewarning is not only created with the announcement of the curfew but also with some news from outside the locale of the event. This news came in the form of direct speech acts of interrogation, and it thrived based on the shared situational knowledge between both interlocutors.

> I got a call from a friend of mine, and he asked me, "are you at the toll gate?" I said yes, I am. And **he** said **he** is coming to pick **me** up from **there**, that I should leave, that what **they** are planning at the toll gate **today**, my heart cannot take **it**.
>
> Serah Ibrahim

The conversation between the reporter (I) and the caller (he), as well as a reference to a third party (they), engages the deictic expressions; the dialogue connects the significant parties in the conflict. There is also a reference to the place of action (there) and the time (today). This distant reference to a place can be metaphorically interpreted beyond geographical location. It is also a psychological attempt to distance the speaker and the place.

> Somebody from the Lagos state government office is **here**, and **they** want to talk to **us,** so**I** directed the person to the stage…**he** kept talking to me on the way, but **I** said **I** didn't have the time… **he** kept insisting that **he** needed to speak.
>
> Serah Ibrahim

These geographical and person dichotomies are further reinforced when representatives from the Lagos State Government are sent to the protesters. Also, a sense of unity is portrayed as binding the protesters, not just with the use of deictic expressions but with other words and situations as illustrated in the data, where everyone has to be addressed together, and not just a select few. In the course of relaying the message from the government to the group, an inference is generated by the latter that it might be a ploy from the DSS to arrest some protesters. All these linguistic nuances point to an attempt by the protesters to be prepared for any eventuality.

2. Pract of preventing

The pract of preventing is projected in the data through physical body movements that involve a collection and disposal of any and every object that could be used as an instrument of warfare, where a fight breaks out. The protesters jointly do this activity, and here, the deictic expressions come into use, showing the unity of action and purpose in preventing possible conflicts. The joint effort also shows that the participants share situational knowledge about possible consequences of violence in the area.

> The clean sweep was not for dirt… **we** did it to take away stones and sticks, to take away any form of instrument or tool that anybody can use as a form of weapon. **We** made sure that everywhere was clean**.**
>
> **Serah Ibrahim**

A pract of preventing can also be deduced from the Lagos State Government's proposed attempt to have a form of dialogue with the protesters, thus, requesting a group of representatives. The voice of the Lagos State Governor is enunciated through a direct reference to him by the representative.

> …and what he said was that the governor was asking for seven people who are going to represent the protest at Lekki ground
>
> …the man kept insisting, and **he** said **we** have to be **there** before 3:30… that **they** have bus **here**. And **he** was now screaming…

This projects a pract of an attempt to reach a compromise to aid the return to normalcy. The heightened prosody of this representative's voice, as stated in the data as "screaming", shows pressure and desperation to get peace to reign again in the area. Apart from this increase in pitch, there is also stipulated temporal deixis because the proposed meeting time is specified as "before 3:30".

> …So I just left the bus driver there, and **I** ran towards the protest ground. Immediately I climbed the stage, and I told the person on the mic. That **they** are coming, **I** just thought that it was police officers, that was my thought. 'Cos **I** would never imagine the Nigerian army would shoot that way at people, at citizens
>
> **Serah Ibrahim**

During the particular hour that the soldiers arrive at the scene, there is another projection of the pract of preventing and this is done with a physical act of running. Specifically, the eyewitness runs towards the centre stage, where she announces this information. However, there is a presupposition that the sounds of gunshots are from police officers. There is an insistence on this fact despite the refutation from others. This presupposes that the soldiers are the last armed officers expected at the grounds. Also, this pract is further projected through conversational acts between the reporter and others present at the event. The speaker's personal experience and knowledge prevent her from coming to terms with the fact that soldiers were the ones shooting in the arena.

3. Pract of realising

All forms of doubt and disbelief are erased from protesters' minds when they see the military men riding into the protest arena on three military motorcycles. Although at first, there is a presupposition that the military men are there to lend support, however, this thought is soon erased when the protesters behold the situation in unison, as portrayed with the deictic element (we). Also, the increased pitch with which the protesters initially hail the soldiers shows their positive energy, excitement, and psychological happiness, fueling the presupposition that the army is on their side. The protesters expressed this presupposition before their realisation that they are on their own and that the soldiers are there on the orders of the government (they).

> **We** had noticed **them** in the peaceful protest from the morning, so seeing **them** going towards that direction, what **we** were thinking was that **they** are going to stop the… whatever is going on **there**… so **we** thought the army on bikes were going to stop the army coming from oriental side on vans from shooting. So **we** were praising them.
>
> **Serah Ibrahim**

The pract of realising is further projected in the reporter's account of seeing a bus labelled "Awatse" in her flight towards the LCC. The name "Awatse" is referential and metaphorical, representative of the Nigerian Army. Combining these textual activities reveals enough to show the agent and actor of the action.

> While running towards the LCC, that was when I saw two vans, and it was written AWATSE…written on the van and that was when I now believed that indeed, this is the Nigerian army…
>
> **Serah Ibrahim**

This combination also thrives on a shared situational knowledge of what the word represents as being the name given to a particular operation within the Nigerian army. This moment of realisation clears all doubts from the reporter's mind, especially when more soldiers troop in, in the wake of those on motorbikes.

4. Pract of surviving

Next, the pract of surviving is projected in the data through different elements from the interactant and textual activities. Body movement acts are used to project the protesters' attempt to seek refuge within the property of Lekki Concession Company (LCC which is nearby. However, this meets with counter body movement acts as they are pushed out of the premises and locked out.

> **They** paid **us** no attention…**they** pushed the peaceful protesters out and locked the gate so that **they** could stay in **there**

Another body movement act is used to project the pract of surviving. The singular first-person pronoun deictic is used, showing the individualistic attempt at survival portrayed in the data. The body movement acts are highlighted in the excerpt below:

> So while trying to put down my head and stay low, **I** was looking around for anybody I would know around the tent area. Immediately I heard some girls behind me shouting and screaming "**They** don kill her, they don kill her", immediately I turned and saw that somebody had been shot. Hence, everybody went there, a lot of boys started removing their shirts to stop the bleeding.

The situation becomes tense, and assistance is only remotely rendered; however, more protesters soon rise to help one another as the needs arise.

The use of deictic expressions is further projected in the excerpt above, where a high pitch is used to say the quoted words. Within these quoted words, there are pronominal references that show a dichotomy between "they" (the government/soldiers) and "her" (the victim(s)). And this leads to the next pract, which is that of helping.

5. Pract of helping

The pract of helping is projected in the data through the speaker's voice which relies heavily on deictic expressions. There is copious use of direct assertive speech acts which clearly state what happened. Also, there is a shared situational knowledge of the time of departure of the ambulances and the reason for the daily presence of the ambulances on the protest ground; thus, there is no surprise at the absence of the ambulances at that point in time. The reason for the presence of the ambulances is also clearly stated using direct assertive speech acts. All these point to a significant reason which is to help people get over whatever type of medical situation they experience while being in the protest.

Much later in the events, after one death is already recorded, the data shows that the reporter kneels and pleads with a soldier for mercy and permission to take the wounded to the hospital. This pract is projected using a physical act of kneeling to beg, which is contextually symbolic of humility and mercy-seeking. Thus, the speaker is drawing from the shared cultural knowledge of the symbolism of kneeling. All these culminate into the pract of seeking help for those who have been wounded as well as those who were unwounded but who were in danger of being shot dead also.

At the arrival of the ambulances, psychological acts of joy and relief are displayed because help has finally come. There is an attempt to engage the physical act of lifting the wounded to the incoming ambulances. However, this act is unsuccessful as the soldiers stop them at gunpoint. The soldiers

are able to stall this act without engaging in any conversational act with the protesters; instead, only physical actions are employed –guns pointed at the protesters. Thus, there is no misunderstanding of what is communicated – do not help them.

The Instagram live coverage of the event also projects the request for help in the heat of the shootings and harassment, and the speaker (Obianuju Udeh) engages the activity of presupposition where she says, "the soldiers are supposed to let them (the ambulance) pass", however, the opposite is what unfolds eventually. There is also a use of the second person pronoun as a deictic expression when she says, "Please if **you** can call an ambulance, the soldiers are supposed to let **them** pass". This statement transfers a massive responsibility to the viewers online because the first person reporter in the heat of the event cannot carry out the request.

In the absence of the ambulance as orchestrated by the soldiers, the protesters resort to crude means of helping one another. This pract is projected in direct speech acts and deictic expressions where the speaker asks if a bullet has been found inside the thigh of a gunshot victim. "**You don** see **am**?" This translates to "have **you** seen **it**?" "You" in this instance has now changed contextually to represent an ad-hoc surgeon in the face of gunfire from soldiers.

> A boy jumped on me and shouted, "cover **her**, cover **her**". **I** didn't even understand why **he** did that. **They** shot **that** boy on my back.
>
> **Obianuju Udeh**

Furthermore, to protect Obianuju Udeh, the recorder of the live event, a young man uses himself as a human shield for her and gets shot instead. While at it, the eyewitness relates that the young man engaged in a lot of direct verdictive acts which (got him) compelled to protect her. Many people sustain gunshot and stampede injuries, and the protesters are in dire

need of an ambulance at this point. The data shows Obianuju calling on the Instagram viewers to help call for an ambulance to come to the protest ground, presupposing that the soldiers would let them through the barricades.

6. Pract of placating

It soon becomes evident to the protesters and the recorder of the Instagram live coverage that the soldiers have no intention of letting the ambulances through, as reflected in the data. There is presupposition from the speakers; this turns out to be a costly language tool because it eventually dawns on them that they are totally at the mercy of the soldiers. As a final fight for survival, the protesters plead with the soldiers to permit medical attention for the wounded. "So **we** were like, please see the ambulance, see the ambulance, **they** shot **her**, let**'s** take **her** to the ambulance" (Serah Ibrahim). However, these pleas fall on deaf ears.

This excerpt shows an apparent dichotomy between the preys (we) and the predators (they), and even while addressing the soldiers, there is a sense in which she distances the soldiers from their role as the perpetrators of predation. This is likely done for the sake of politeness and as a face-saving technique to gain the soldiers' favour and assistance for the fallen victims. However, these language tactics do not yield any positive response for the victims.

> **they** are taking **them** to the ambulance… una no see ambulance…
> If you can get an ambulance, if you can get an ambulance for us--for us, somebody is bleeding please, gunshot wound
>
> **Obianuju Udeh**

According to DJ Switch's account, there is a similar occurrence at their area of the Lekki tarmac. Aids who carry wounded victims to the ambulance

spots return with them because the ambulances are nowhere to be found. They call on online viewers and participants to help reach out to ambulance drivers so as to save someone who has sustained gunshot injuries.

7. Pract of anger

When language and politeness tactics do not favour the protesters, frustration and anger soon set in, and this is reflected using psychological acts and high pitch – "**You** came to kill peaceful people, and **you** are not letting ambulance take **them**". However, these acts do not go without a response because the soldiers' body acts are that they "cocked the gun and a live bullet fell". Protesters' pent up emotions and frustrations are released through a national anthem rendition – a metaphor representing the cord that holds Nigeria together. This rendition presents multiple elements of textual co(n)text. First, there is an obvious inference intended to be deduced by the soldiers whose first call of duty is to the nation whose anthem is being sung. Next, there is a shared situational knowledge of this fact between the protesters and the soldiers. Finally, the protesters sing the anthem at a higher pitch – an activity that requires the full prosodic participation of the interactants.

Furthermore, with body acts pointing towards a fire that had started around the protest ground, Obianuju Udeh informs the online participants of her presupposition that the fire was started strategically to divert the protesters to escape through certain spots which are already ambushed. There is a metaphoric reference to Lagos in the excerpt below as being on fire.

> Look at Lagos please, ladies and gentlemen, look at over **there** (pointing), look at, Lagos is on fire, they blocked everywhere, and **they** want **us** to pass so that they can shoot us there in that fire, look at fire over there (pointing), look at fire over there (pointing)
>
> **Obianuju Udeh**

This excerpt (above) also contains several deictic elements that show the side on which each party belongs and references to specific places of action (there). The speaker even takes it further by actually pointing, engaging the deixis as indexicals. Logically but also metaphorically, the deixis for the perpetrators are in the subject form – showing the performer of the action. At the same time, the protesters are referred to using objectified deixis, also showing their predicament of being on the receiving end of the actions.

The harmlessness and helplessness of the protesters are reinforced in the excerpts below. There are instances of referential and contextual use of the deictic elements in these excerpts to show the parties involved in the saga. In the excerpt below, the contextual referents of the objective deictic elements are stated clearly. Although the deictic reference to the location is not contextually embedded; however, this is not so much of a mystery because the event and its location of occurrence are quite popular. Obianuju makes her point using interrogative and declarative sentences and expressing emotional acts through her tears and emotional breakdown.

> peaceful people na in **they** con shoot, they just con shoot **us** anyhow, **they** just con shoot **us**--some of **us**, **they** just shoot people for nothing, nobody had a gun
>
> **Obianuju Udeh**

In this excerpt (above), some repeated words emphasise the action, the actors and the receivers; these repetitions are a window into the speaker's psychology. The frustration and anger are palpable and intense.

> **They** were pointing the guns at **us** and shooting – live bullets. Who takes live bullets to a protest? Who does that?
>
> **Obianuju Udeh**

Even later, when she reports the events in a solo YouTube video, she released a couple of days after the incident, the emotional frustration and disbelief are still quite present, shown in the rhetorical questions she asks while making the video.

8. Allopract of helping – cautioning

Seeing the carnage going on around them, the speakers perform the pract of cautioning in their utterances, body acts and conversational acts with others around them. There is also the presence of presupposition in the data when the speaker assumes that she has been shot because of her bloodstained clothes.

> A guy in front of me was talking, he was trying to tell everybody to stay down and hide, so I was trying to crawl in front, and I was trying to get up, immediately the guy was shot, in his stomach and his intestines came out and splashed on me.
>
> **Serah Ibrahim**

Also, the irony is present as another protester who encourages people to remain low and immobile to reduce their chances of being shot is shot dead right in the middle of his words of caution.

9. Pract of despair

So naturally, fear grips the speaker more as it becomes evident that immobility only makes them sitting ducks waiting to be shot dead. Also, more people were writhing in pain from gunshot wounds with no hope of medical attention any time soon. There are psychological acts of emotional breakdown, tears, fear of death, despair in the situation and so on. And at the peak of the emotions, the speaker begins to raise rhetorical questions for herself about the verity of the identity of the shooters as there was a sense

of denial that Nigerian soldiers could ever at any point open fire on Nigerian citizens on Nigerian soil.

> I just sat down there for a while; I was no more crawling; I was thinking, like, are these people army men? I was feeling bad that there was nothing I could do.
>
> **Serah Ibrahim**

Despair and hopelessness are implied in the excerpt above through the speaker's physical act of sitting rather than crawling to safety. She also projects psychological acts through the rhetorical question she raises about the identity of the armed men. Finally, her unwelcome helplessness is portrayed in the direct assertive speech acts that she could not help in any way as she is used to doing. And thus, the unity and formidability of the protesters has lasted only till the soldiers of the Nigerian army, on the alleged orders of the government, shot at protesters at the Lekki toll gate, killing peaceful, unarmed civilians – their fellow Nigerians.

Conclusion

This study investigated the use of deictic elements in the eyewitness accounts of the events that unfolded at the Lekki toll gate during the killing of protesters on the 20th of October, 2020. This investigation was done using Jacob Mey's(2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory, and the following practs were discovered: practs of (fore)warning, preventing, realising, surviving, helping, placating, anger, despair and an allopract of helping – cautioning. These pragmatic acts show the communicational import of what transpired at the scene and how the participants managed the situation in the heat and outside the heat of the event.

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Media Representation of 2020 EndSARS Protests and Social Actors in Nigeria

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Abstract

The Nigerian EndSARS protests of 2020 is one of the events that made news, both within and outside the country. This study focuses on the different ways media reports represented the 2020 EndSARS protests and social actors in Nigeria. The study adopts the transitivity aspect of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) and van Leeuwen's Socio-semantic categorization method to point out who is represented, how events are represented in the media reportage of 2020 EndSARS protest.

Keywords: Nigeria, EndSARS, Media Report, Protests, Social Actors..

Introduction

Nigeria, as a nation practising democracy, bequeathed to her citizenry a right to lawful assembly (protest) as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution as amended. This right is often described as inalienable in nature, and the citizens are quite aware of this fundamental right. Thanks to the media which has been a veritable tool in disseminating information to the people and also has relentlessly sensitized, educated and informed the populace

about this right, on the one hand, escalate possible areas of infraction to this right and others on the other hand.

Several policies of government have at different times led to one protest or the other. Popular amongst these protests are the "Ali must go" protest of 1978, the protest against the removal of oil subsidy of 2012 and of course, the more recent #ENDSARS protest of 2020. In all of these protests, the media has always been at the forefront, providing insights latest information (NEWS) and, in most cases giving an on-the-spot assessment of the whole situation to the teeming populace. It is safe to say that the media outfits, whether print, electronic or social, are core actors in any national civic protest. Television channels are among the reliable broadcast media outlets for disseminating news objectively, and they play major roles in reporting live events, stories, documentaries for entertainment, education, information etc. Television news is preferred by most people because most times one watches the live events reported in the news; sees the actors and hears directly from them and what others have to say about them, as these events are not rehearsed or edited but shown just as it was recorded prior to being aired. In doing this, the news reporter presents views, ideas, ideological constructions that inform, educate and influence people's choices and public opinion, which targets social change. Alo (2007) observes that actors are named and identified in news reports so that viewers can recognize their person, identity and role. Language, therefore, becomes a significant linguistic resource purposefully utilized by news reporters to present and represent social actors and events so as to be identified by viewers. Hence, it is the intent of this paper to examine the roles played by some select media outfits in Nigeria (Channels Television and TV Continental, which shall be hereafter referred to as Channels and TVC respectively) in representing the recent #ENDSARS protests and social actors in Nigeria.

The #EndSARS Protests and the Roles of Channels Television and TVC

The #ENDSARS protest began to gather momentum first on the social media space in June 2018. In the event of the bestiality, brutality and harassment, oppression and gross misconduct, Nigerians have suffered in the hands of operatives of the now-disbanded Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), a special unit in the Nigerian Police Force, created in 1992 and saddled with the responsibility of swift response, investigation and prevention of violent crimes such as Armed Robbery and so on.

Several Nigerians have fallen victim to the brutalities imposed by the SARS operatives, with many lives lost and several others suffering different degrees of permanent incapacitation. All these culminated into the 2020 protests by some Nigerian social media users, crying out for justice with the hashtag #ENDSARS to voice out their concerns. In other words, one can conclude that the #ENDSARS protest is a cry for justice and freedom from police bestiality, human rights abuses and hostilities against innocent Nigerians. The cries from Nigerian youths attracted the world's attention to the plight of Nigerians, and this was made possible by the roles played by the media both locally and internationally. The roles played by Channels and TVC are more profound. Hence, the reason for this paper.

Channels and TVC are both located in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial city and are unarguably the leading television outfits in Nigeria, with regard to news coverage, reportage, large viewing audience and promptness/accuracy in relaying news materials to the public through their numerous news and investigative programs. Channels Television, for instance, hinted at the #ENDARS movement for the first time in June 2018 via an exclusive investigative program titled "SPECIAL REPORT" anchored by Ini John Mekwa, a Nigerian reporter with Channels. According to the report, the EndSARS movement became popular "following increased reports of extra-judicial killings and police brutality."

The death of a certain Kolade Johnson, a 36-year-old man, that was killed by an operative of the special anti-cultism unit of the Nigerian Police Force in March 2019 prompted Channels to revisit the story of the #ENDSARS movement; which only existed in the social media space then.

In the year 2020, the "Special Report" beamed its searchlight for the third time on the #ENDSARS struggle by revisiting a case of another extra-judicial killing of one Mr Femi Olayiwola, a man popularly called Femi Best whose unfortunate killing took place sometime in 2011 (about ten years ago) by a certain DPO of Oloson Police Division around Onipanu, Lagos. These and several other killings in the recent time, especially the alleged unprovoked killing of a young Nigerian in Ugheli, Delta State and the ruthless killing of a certain upcoming musician, Daniel Chibuike, popularly known as Sleek (the Punch, 22 September 2020), which took place at Elelenwo area of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, sparked off a national outrage, this time not in the social media space but on the streets of major cities in Nigeria. A full-blown protest, one may call it.

TVC, on its own, through its numerous platforms, provided an in-depth analysis and on-the-spot coverage of the protest beaming it live and in some cases providing graphical footages emerging from the protest ground as the protest began to spread across the country from Lagos to Abuja to Akure to Enugu to Owerri to Ebonyi and some parts of the North too adapting the protest model to suit their peculiarities. Channels and TVC provided coverage and exclusive reportage of the protest. In fact, the first segment is devoted to the EndSARS protest in the news bulletin of Channels such as the News track, News across the country and the News at ten with a soundtrack. Both TVC and Channels operated live studios in their various stations airing and keeping track of the three weeks protests on a daily basis. This enabled feedback and state of being from across the country in the wake of the ENDSARS protests. Correspondents from the two stations were deployed to the protests grounds to report directly to the

studios intermittently. Olu Philips covered the protests for Channels, and Ayo Makinde reported for TVC.

Channels and TVC did not all have it rosy in the period the protests lasted. Aside, the risk members of staff went through in their bid to get information across to the populace, Ayo Makinde, the TVC correspondent covering the protest; for instance, was attacked while on duty, both stations were equally the target of government and some members of the society who felt unimpressed by certain realities around. For instance, on the 26th October 2020, the government of Nigeria, through the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC); the regulatory agency of all media outfits in Nigeria, slammed a 3 million Naira fine on Channels for an alleged violation of broadcasting code in their reportage of the #ENDSARS protests (Premium Times October 26, 2020). This penal fine generated mixed reactions from Nigerians, civil society organizations and foreign observers who resorted to suing NBC to upturn the fine on these media outfits (Premium Times November 1, 2020). TVC, on the other hand, experienced the wrath of some angry protesters, who allegedly burnt a section of the station, including vehicles belonging to the station and some members of staff, broadcast equipment worth several millions of naira were not spared in the touch of the inferno. This incident led to the station's shut down for a period of time. Upon resumption of broadcast activities, the station continued to provide news reportage of the #ENDSARS protest.

Up until the aftermath of the protest, both stations still reported the proceedings of the judicial panel of enquiry emplaced to look into the petitions submitted by victims of the police brutalities and SARS officials who were involved in one misconduct or the other. It is of interest that the soundtrack devoted to the protest on Channels is still in use whenever a story pertaining to the protest is to be aired.

Review of Previous Studies and Statement of the Problem

Linguistic studies on media reports in Nigeria have majorly focused on newspaper/magazine editorials and headlines, for instance, Taiwo (2007), Odebunmi (2007), Alo (2007), Ayodabo (2007), Osisanwo (2012 and 2016), Oyeleye and Osisanwo (2013a). Others who delved into Social media reportage include: (Chiluwa, 2012; Akinfemisoye, 2014; Kombol, 2014; Ugoala, 2015 and Shinkafi, 2016). But none of these studies investigated the 2020 EndSARS protests in Nigeria. The available works on EndSARS protests in Nigeria include (Oloyede & Elega, 2019; Dambo, Ersoy & Auwal et al., 2020 and Onwubiko & Egwim, 2021); however, their focus was not on Television reportage.

Oloyede & Elega (2019) explore the history, relevance of hashtags and timeline of prominent hashtags in Nigeria. Focusing on Nigeria's EndSARS protest, they note that the hashtag was used in creating public awareness on police brutality, especially the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) of the commission. They identify, among others, extortion, rape, physical & verbal assault, extra-judicial killings, wanton arrests and intimidation tactics meted on Nigerians, especially the Youth. They conclude that hashtag activism is instrumental for social transformation and, as such, projects and influences what other media outlets think and present to the public. Through the themes analysed, they conclude that police abuse is high in Nigeria. Also, media/virtual protests like EndSARS is prevalent and overwhelming because of Nigeria's political outfit, which has consistently projected the aptitude to inhibit the success of the social movement.

Dambo, Ersoy & Auwal et al (2020) investigate Nigeria's #EndSARS movement and its implication on online protests. They note that #EndSARS virtual activism started from Twitter before it was taken offline to the streets of Lagos, Abuja and other cities in the country and, as such, employed it as their data source while imploring Leximancer 4.5 software

as an analytical tool. They identify corruption, injustice, human rights abuses, and activism as the major themes of the protest.

Onwubiko & Egwim (2021) study the pragmatics of political claims and social responses amidst the EndSARS saga in Nigeria. They observe that Nigerian leaders are in the habit of making empty promises that are void of initiatives and actions in response to social issues like the case of police brutality and the Lekki massacre of EndSARS protesters. This, they attribute to grand corruption, political hypocrisy, cruelty, among others, on the side of the leaders and as such, has promoted solidarity among the masses, who adopt satiric responses and protests to express their stance to government and resist reckless domination from the men of the force. The study concludes that the media is a veritable source for the promulgation and propagation of people's opinions concerning the happenings in society.

The present study, however, diverges from the concerns of the above-related studies as it is neither interested in the history and relevance of hashtag activism in Nigeria nor in the implication of the EndSARS movement on online protests. This study, therefore, is significant in the sense that it fills the existing gap by studying representational strategies of two television stations of the 2020 EndSARS protests in Nigeria. It further highlights how these TV channels labelled and allocated roles to the EndSARS protests and the social actors involved, thus, shaping viewers' choices.

Theoretical Framework

Halliday & Matthiessen (2004) see language as a semiotic system that is structured for use in different contexts to achieve an effect. According to Hall (1997), representation is the process of producing meaning through language. Thus, meaning is constructed by a linguistic representation that is capable of influencing how we perceive the world around us and so shape our social response (Halliday, 1990). Media representation thus implies the

different ways social actors/actions are labelled through various linguistic indices. In order to highlight the various ways the media control the viewer's thoughts towards social actions/actors, the present study adopts Halliday's systemic functional grammar (SFG) and van Leeuwen's socio-semantic categorization model of critical discourse analysis (CDA) in analyzing the data.

Halliday (1994) observes that English clauses can be analysed in terms of three lines of meanings, namely: ideational (how clauses represent the world), interpersonal (how clauses enact social change) and textual (how they create the message). Ideational meaning has a transitivity system as meaning representation. Thus hidden meanings (ideologies) in a text are realized as clauses and then are analysed with regard to the three elements of the clause: participants (behaver), Process (behavioural, i.e. the verbal group involved in the process) and circumstance (manner of behaviour) (Trinh, Hoa & Phuc, 2017:212). Halliday further classifies the process into six, namely: material, relational, verbal, mental, behavioural and existential (1994: 107-138). In the course of the analysis, aspects of the transitivity process employed by Channels and TVC, which are embedded in ideological constructs, will be identified in order to account for the discursive features of the text that function as representational strategies.

van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic system complements Halliday's (SFG) in this study as it is concerned with the semantic resources of representing social practices and actors. It becomes a useful tool in identifying what/who is represented and how the participant is represented. Leeuwen's contribution to CDA (which studies power abuse, dominance and inequality) draws impute from Halliday's (SFG) with regard to how social and ideological meanings are derived from the linguistic representation of social actors. Leeuwen's (1996) model discusses how social actions/actors are described and identified in terms of the roles assigned to them as represented in the discourse. Here social actors and

agents are not categorized as a result of grammatical roles rather through the process of inclusion and exclusion in discourse for ideological purposes.

van Leeuwen (1996 & 2008) identifies categories and sub-categories of actor description, but this study will limit the discussion on the ones identified in the data. Social actors can be represented as individuals through the process of *individualization* and as a group known as *assimilation* **(**van Leeuwen 2008, p. 24**)**. Assimilation is categorized into two: aggregation (quantifying a group by statistics) and collectivization, which generalizes. *Indetermination* is when actors are unspecified, especially with the use of indefinite pronouns like some, while *determination* is when their identity is specified. Some actors can be *nominated* by reporters in terms of their unique identity for proper identification, while *categorization* is in terms of the functions they share with others. Categorization has two subcategories: functionalization (characterize social actors in terms of what they do) and identification (represent actors in terms of what they permanently are). Actors are also *personalized***,** i.e. represented as humans through personal pronouns, proper names etc. van Leeuwen (1996) observed that a social actor could be included or excluded in a text to suit the interest of the author. When they are *included,* they can be activated (actors of a material process realized by participation) or passivated (when they undergo a material process like *subjected* or *beneficialised*). *Exclusion* refers to the omission of social actors by means of linguistic mechanisms. This he categorized into two: backgrounding (exclusion that leaves a trace in the text and suppression (exclusion without a trace in the text, it can be realized by suppression through passive agent deletion).

Methodology

Data for this study was retrieved from Channels' and TVC's YouTube channel and website reports in representing the EndSARS protests and the

social actors involved in the event aired between October 2020 and February 2021. Within this 5 months period, EndSARS protests and threats to a repeat of the protests (because of perceived laxity on the side of the Government to honour the demands of the protesters) took place. These two Television stations have been selected because they rank best among the other 10 top Television stations in Nigeria as of 2021 as a result of their up-to-date news, trending stories and 24 hours news headline updates of the happenings around the country. Highlighting the roles allotted to social actors by Channels and TVC reports on the EndSARS protests, this study investigates the representational strategies engaged by these Television channels with a focus on the headlines. Theo van Leeuwen's framework on CDA is employed in identifying media representational strategies, and the transitivity aspect of Halliday's SFG becomes useful in identifying the roles allocated to these social actors in the headlines and cover stories. The headlines and cover stories are the outlets through which the media sell their ideologies to the public, and as such becomes important to study the strategies deployed by the media to imprint their ideologies on the minds of the viewers.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Various representations of the protest and social actors, and ideological motivations of the media as drawn from the data is presented as follows:

EndSARS protest as susceptible to repression

Nigerians who seem to have become familiar with the calculated reticence characterizing the present administration took to the streets to expose the evil ravaging the nation and soliciting restructuring of the system. As presented by the media, some hoodlums believed to have been sponsored by some anti-protests powerful groups who also are alleged to be sponsors of some despicable acts of the security operatives launched attacks on the protesters to engender repression. Channels and TVC project the tragic effect (i.e. the loss of so many lives in Nigeria) of the EndSARS protest,

which was orchestrated by the activities of these hoodlums, in a bid to emphasise the ideological stance that public protests are often confronted with cruelty. This is exemplified in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 1: #EndSARS Protests: Gov Oyetola Orders Investigation into Death of Two persons in Osogbo *(TVC, October 18, 2020)*

The social actor, Governor Oyetola of Nigeria's Osun State, is personalised in the discourse and endowed with an active role with regard to the material process of ordering for an investigation into the death (circumstance) of the beneficiaries (the dead) in his state. Whereas the actor (Governor Oyetola) is activated here, the goal (the person receiving the ordering to investigate), who in most discourses is optional, is excluded, thereby emphasising the circumstance - death. The media purposefully projected the actor for specification and easy identification, being a known figure in the society. The beneficiaries are aggregated (two persons), and the place, Osogbo, is nominated in order to convince the viewers to accept the fact that the EndSARS protest indeed claimed lives and, as such, a negative episode to the society.

Excerpt 2: **#**EndSARS protest: At least three shot dead, others injured in Benin (*Channels, October 2020***)**

Excerpt 3: #EndSARS Autopsy conducted on 99 bodies, three from Lekki Toll Gate Shooting **(***Channels, October 2020)*

The event process in excerpts 2 and 3 omits human actors, and the social actors who are responsible for the material process (shot and conducted) are excluded. This suppression strategy is achieved through passive agent deletion and is used by the media in excerpt 2 to generalize the incident and make it look like the protest in Benin is a deathtrap. Nomination is also achieved here through the use of the proper noun Benin and Lekki Toll Gate to indicate a specific location. Again, the media aggregates (…three shot dead, …99 bodies) and subjects the social actors

as beneficiaries of the deadly protest. The report produced by the media had footage of some dead bodies lying carelessly on the road while others had blood stains all over their bodies to further represent the tragic aspect of the protest as real to viewers, thus, foregrounding the ideology that the End SARS protest was actually subjugated.

Excerpt 4: End SARS Protests: Nigeria says 'many lives lost' in unrest (*TVC October 29, 2020*)

Excerpt 5: #EndSARS: At least 12 Protesters killed in Lekki, Alausa – Amnesty International (*Channels, October 22, 2020*)

TVC uses assimilation to nominate the social actor, Nigeria, through a verbal process in order to express meaning and buttress their ideological quest. The Relational process contained in the clause 'many lives lost' serves to identify and define the circumstance, unrest. The reporter of excerpt 5 backgrounds the Sayer and aggregates the beneficialised in relation to the material process 'killed' and also clearly states the locations of the circumstance. By suppressing the Sayer, the media succeeded in foregrounding the stance that protesters were killed and that the report was not directly gathered by them; rather, they are reporting according to the news released by amnesty International for the sake of clarity.

EndSARS Protests as a call for reformation

The reports also view the protest as an appeal by the public to the government for restructuring of the system (governance and institutional reform) as everything seems to be on the verge of collapse. Among the seven-point demand of EndSARS protesters are Institutional reforms (security), Reduction in the cost of governance, Constitution reforms, Education reforms, Health reforms, Youth affairs reform and Public office reforms. From the list of demands above, one can say that these protesters were fighting for the common good of the masses because when these

issues are considered and attended to, the masses will enjoy the dividends of a democratic society. Excerpts 6-9 elaborate on this claim.

Excerpt 6: #EndSARS: It is not only police reforms Govt Owe Us-Seun Kuti (*Channels, Oct. 18, 2020)*

Excerpt 7: #EndSARS: Davido presents demands of protesters *(Channels, Oct. 12, 2020)*

The media tend to nominate social actors in its reports probably for proper identification, as in excerpts 6 & 7. Although Seun Kuti is the actor in excerpt 6, he is passively excluded from the clauses that make up the report. This strategy employed by the media is to emphasise the aim of the protest and foreground government as the human agent (Goal) through which this aim can be achieved. Also, the use of the pronoun 'us' assimilates by the collectivisation of the Actors being referred to. In excerpt 7, Davido is personalized and activated in relation to the material process 'presents' demands of protesters. As a social figure among the protesters, the media spots him in a bid to advance the stance that prominent figures are part of this reform agenda.

Excerpt 8: #EndSARS protesters unveil #SevenPointDemand (*TVC Oct 16, 2020)*

Excerpt 9: #EndSARS protesters demand good governance, End to Insecurity (*Channels, Oct. 2020)*

The media in excerpts 8 & 9 activates EndSARS Protesters in relation to the material process 'unveil' and 'demand'. The protesters summarized the reform agenda in a seven-point demand as listed above. The reporters' aim is to let the viewers come to the consciousness that it is not only the government that can come up with a scheme. The masses can as well make demands from the government, especially in areas that are affecting them.

EndSARS Protests as Youth affair

The media also label the EndSARS protest as a youth affair owing to the fact that the participants are mostly youths, and those addressing the protesters refer to them as youths, as exemplified below:

Excerpt 10: #EndSARSNow: Lagos Youths protest late into the night (*TVC, Oct 9, 2020)*

Excerpt 11: #EndSARS Campaign: Youths Protest, Demand End to SARS operatives (*Channels, October 10, 2020)*

Excerpt 12: SARSMUSTEND: Don't get distracted, Eyes on the ball, Aisha Yesufu tells Nigerian Youths (*Channels, October 14, 2020)*

Excerpt 13: #EndSARS: Youths have realized that Nigeria's Future belongs to them says Moghalu (*Channels, February 3 2020)*

Excerpt 14: Youth stage counter protests on Saturday over reopening of Lekki Toll Gate (*TVC, February 9, 2021)*

TVC uses the material process and the adverbial phrase to encode the meaning that protesters are resolute and determined to get results while advancing their ideological pursuit. Lagos youths are activated and collectivised as the Actors in this interest. The reporter in excerpt 11 activates the youths with regard to the material process (protest and demand) through the Goal (end) to the Circumstance. The media in excerpt 12 deemphasized the social actor (Aisha Yesufu) in relation to the verbal process 'tell' and the beneficilised (Nigerian Youths) by placing the clause in the later part of the sentence. The implicature here is that the reporter is more interested in what the social actor says than in her personality and also the beneficialised. Again the Sayer (Moghalu) in excerpt 13 is also deemphasized with the verbal process. Youths are foregrounded as the Goal through the material process to accentuate the label. The 'that' clause indicates the Attributive Participant with the existential process 'belongs' and a semantic object 'them' that act as the

beneficialised. As a result of the genocide that took place at Lekki Toll Gate, protesters are against the Toll Gate, becoming functional while investigations are still ongoing. The reporter in excerpt 14 activates the Youth (Actor participant) with the material process 'stage' to achieve the Goal 'counter protest'. The Circumstance is passivised with the use of the preposition "over" just to buttress the fact that the youth is ready to defend their cause by available means.

EndSARS protesters as different from hoodlums

Media reports also view EndSARS protesters as peaceful but are infiltrated by some hoodlums whose brutal aim and violent dispositions are in opposition to that of the protesters. They went on to catalogue and post pictures of violent scenes of the EndSARS protest.

Excerpt 15: #EndSARS protest turns violent as Hoodlums Attack Journalist, Oyetola's Aides (*TVC, Oct. 17, 2020*)

Excerpt 16: #EndSARS protest has degenerated into what we don't want – Ismaeel Ahmed (*Channels, Oct. 20, 2020)*

In excerpts 15 & 16, the EndSARS protest is activated as the active non-human participant that performs the material process of *turning* and *degenerating* into an act of brutality. TVC, in excerpt 15, takes the report further by highlighting that some persons whom the reporter labels hoodlums (actors) with indetermination to disassociate them from the real EndSARS participants, through the material process 'attack' journalist and Oyetola's aides. Reiterating the brutal nature of the protest, the reporter functionalized the attackers while subjecting the beneficiaries. The identity of the journalist remains indeterminate while the aides are determined as Oyetola's to attract viewers' sympathy, knowing the social status of Oyetola. The second clause in excerpt 16 contains 'we' participant who has the role as Senser, with the Phenomenon "don't want", which serves as the mental process that evokes the meaning of thinking and feeling. Here the

Sayer is passivised and assimilated into 'we' by the reporter, perhaps because his role is not really necessary as it is obvious that it is the violent nature of the protest that is quite important to the reporter for ideological purposes.

Excerpt 17: #EndSARS protest: Hoodlums attack Apo in Abuja (*Channels, October 21, 2020*

Excerpt 18: Oct 17, 2020 #EndSARS protest: Hoodlums storm correctional centre in Benin **(***Channels, October 19, 2020*

In excerpts 17 & 18, the categorization 'hoodlums' is done with regard to functionalization. The reporters activated hoodlums as Actor (participants) through the material process 'storm' and 'attack', which are beneficialised by the correctional centre and Apo, respectively. The places of these beneficiaries are also not left out, as the footage of these activities were boldly displayed by TVC to stamp their ideologies in the minds of viewers.

EndSARS Protests as Destructive

Channels and TVC depicted the EndSARS protest as devastating, an activity that was flawed by destruction. It was reported that a lot of government, corporate and individual property were destroyed in the course of the EndSARS protest. However, protesters have attributed the destruction of property to hoodlums who came to mar the protest. This is exemplified below:

Excerpt 19: #EndSARS: Sanwo-Olu Seeks FG's Collaboration in Rebuilding Lagos (*Channels, Nov. 2020*)

Excerpt 20: Lagos State Government presents pictorial report of destruction aftermath #EndSARS protest in Lagos *(TVC Nov 11, 2020*

In excerpt 19, the actor (participant), through a material process, 'seeks' help from the goal (FG) to address the circumstance at hand. The

use of the progressive tense 'rebuilding' denotes action that will take time to complete; thus, Channels portrays the type of destruction caused by the Protest as enormous and one that can only be reformed by the collaborative effort of both the federal and the state government hence, the possessivisation in "FG's". To further project the ideological stance of the media as regards the effects of the protest, TVC, in excerpt 20, emphasizes the fact that there was monumental destruction in Lagos state through the use of the existential process (presents) to highlight the action of the Actor (Lagos State Government). The existential process indicates that there is actually a circumstance (destruction), and the footage shown in the report by TVC helped to buttress the stance they intend to imprint in the mind of viewers.

EndSARS protests as detrimental to Education

Nigeria's educational system has been in a state of emergency for a long time, even though the Federal Government has refused to come to terms with this reality. As at the time of the protest, the lecturers in government-owned universities had been on strike for 8 months because of the government's inability to live up to expectations. Also, the Covid-19 pandemic that rocked the world left all the schools under lock and key. So at the point when the effects of the Covid-19 impact on the country was subsiding, and schools were beginning to reopen to catch up with lost ground, the nationwide protest started, and this led to the suspension of academic activities in the school, postponement of resumption dates and external examinations.

Excerpt 21: #ENDSARS: NECO reschedules exam due to Nationwide Protests *(TVC Oct 19, 2020)*

The state of the nation at the time of the EndSARS protest informs the evidential reports of the media, which sustains the ideology that the protest impeded academic activities, which is detrimental to the education sector and the progress of students. Moreover, education is among the

sectors that are being demanded of government by the protesters to be reformed. In excerpt 21, NECO (National Examination Council) is nominated as an active participant through the material process 'reschedules'. The reporter deemphasized the circumstance in the adverbial phrase 'due to Nationwide Protests', the indetermination of the EndSARS as assimilated in the label "Nationwide" is an ideological strategy deployed by the reporter to emphasise the fact that a National Certificate Examination is being postponed and leaves the viewers to imagine its effects on the academic calendar and the education sector as a whole.

Excerpt 22: Lagos orders closure of schools over ENDSARS Protests (*TVC Oct 19, 2020)*

Excerpt 23: JUST IN: Ondo closes schools over #EndSARS Protests (*Channels, Oct. 20, 2020)*

Also, in Excerpts 22 & 23, Lagos and Ondo are activated through the material process 'orders' and 'closes' respectively, the Circumstance (EndSARS pretests) is foregrounded with the use of the preposition 'over'. The reporters' major focus is on the process (*orders* and *closes*) and the Circumstance (EndSARS protests) but assimilates the agents (Lagos and Ondo) behind the process for ideological purposes.

Political Actors as the voice of EndSARS protesters

The reports also view some political actors as supporters of youth activism. Before now and even during the protests, there had been several agitations from different ethnic groups in Nigeria about the lopsided appointments, employment and infrastructural development made by the present administration. Leaders of the various ethnic groups had called on the government to listen and attend to the agitations of these groups, which all bother on restructuring, but every plea has fallen on deaf ears. Hence, when the youth started the EndSARS protests, most political leaders knew

that they were doing the right thing as police brutality had almost become normal.

Excerpt 24: EndSARS protests give me joy – Ooni of Ife (*TVC, October 13, 2020*

Excerpt 25: Sanwo-Olu orders Police to release all arrested #EndSARS protesters (*TVC, October 13, 2020*

Excerpt 26: Lagos Attorney General orders release of 253 suspects arrested during #EndSARS protests. (*TVC, Nov. 8, 2020*

Excerpt 27: #EndSARS: Gov Obaseki Highlights Relevance of Youth Demands (Channels, October 28, 2020)

The social actor Oba Adeyeye Entian Ogunwusi (Ooni of Ife), who is the Sayer in excerpt 24, has been suppressed by the media. Although he is nowhere in the clause, he is passivated with regard to the joy that the Protest gives him. The reporter captures the actor's reaction in a way that viewers will understand that the youths are not doing something that is out of place but are trying to get the government to do the right thing to the benefit of both the great and the small. So, although the elders and the political actors did not come out to join the youth in the protest, they are somewhere in the background giving their support. Little wonder the governor of Lagos state and his attorney general are activated in excerpts 25 & 26 in relation to the material process of ordering, of which protesters are beneficialised. The reporters so captioned it that the social actors' political functions become clear. For instance, in excerpt 25, the Goal (the police) receives the instruction of the Actor through the material process verb 'release', which is a transitive one. In the case of the attorney, he uses the more definite term "253 suspects", which is an indication that he is abreast with the happenings in the state. Excerpt 27 is another clear evidence that the youths are not revolting against the government but are simply demanding that government should rise to its duties to the nation. Thus, Obaseki, the governor of Edo state, is

activated through the material process of highlighting the relevance of the youths' demands. The presupposition here is that he is in support of what the youths are demanding of government and that their demands are within the ambits of the government. The stance made by reporters here is to enlighten viewers that protesters have been unjustly arrested and detained by the police for demanding fairness.

Security operatives as Perpetrators during EndSARS protest

Nigerians and the world have accused the security operatives and condemned their illegal activities during the protest, especially that of shooting at innocent and unarmed protesters. Even though they denied perpetrating the crime, reports gathered are all against them, as can be seen below:

Excerpt 28: #EndSARS: 'Soldiers were shooting directly at protesters', - Witness (*Channels, February 21, 2021)*

Excerpt 29: Security Operatives fire shots at Protesters at Lekki Toll Plaza (*Channels, Oct 20 2020)*

Excerpt 30: BREAKING: Police Attack #EndSARS protesters in Abuja (*TVC, Oct 11, 2020)*

Excerpt 31: Police fire Teargas, Water Canon At #EndSARS Protesters in Abuja (*Channels, October 11, 2020)*

Nigerian security operatives are portrayed as perpetrators who are in direct opposition to the EndSARS protest despite the fact that institutional reform, especially that of the security, is one of the cardinal demands of the Protesters. The direct words of a witness to the Lekki massacre activate the soldiers as Actors through the material process of 'shooting' and beneficialised the protesters. The reporter backgrounded the Sayer just to foreground the activities of the security operatives to stamp the ideology that they are truly brutal and guilty of other negative vices attributed to them by Nigerians. Excerpt 29 further highlights this ideology, although

the Actors are assimilated, the material process 'fire', the Goal 'shots', the beneficialised 'protesters' and the place are clearly indicated for public notice and to underscore the reporter's ideology. The reporters of excerpts 30 & 31 assigned Actor roles to the police in relation to the material process 'attack ' and 'fire' and beneficialised the protesters at a particular location. Although excerpt 30 did not indicate the Goal, the reporter of excerpt 31 was so categorical about the Goal – teargas and water cannon. Such vivid reportage draws viewers' attention and leaves them with the picture of the media station as one with a detailed objective report.

Conclusion

This study has highlighted several ways the media represent the Protest, protesters, political actors and security operatives with the help of van Leeuwen's categorization model of CDA also, who is represented and how they are represented with the blend of Halliday's transitivity aspect of SFG. In all, the #EndSARS protest is represented by the media as susceptive to repression, reformative, youthful, detrimental to education, destructive and protesters as different from hoodlums. The political actors are represented as the voice of the protesters, while security operatives are represented as opposed to the EndSARS protest. This study, therefore, establishes that the media imprints their ideology in the minds of viewers through their linguistic style of reports and sensitises the viewers with their ideological loaded reports.

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Two Decades of Music Activism against Bad Governance in Nigeria (1999 – 2021)

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Abstract

This article examines music activism in fighting bad governance in Nigeria since the return to democratic governance. Anchored on relative deprivation, a social movement theory, three song tracks; Wasiu Ayinde (Fact, 2005), Sound Sultan (Light up Naija, 2010) and Eedris Abdulkareem (Jagajaga reloaded, 2021) were purposively sampled for content analysis. The three artistes employed the medium of music to represent the voices of the masses in decrying government's deficiency in providing flourishing environment for growth and development, respect for the rule of law, protection and basic social amenities for the citizenry.

Keywords: Music activism, Democracy, Nigerian government, Jagajaga reloaded, Light up Naija, EndSars.

Introduction

Protest is a common feature of every democracy, which allows the governed to voice their dissatisfaction concerning unfavourable policies of the government. People organize themselves in large groups to achieve common social and political goals, which are usually a result of deprivation. Simmons (2019) described this as social movement, which is a reaction to social crises. Protests empower the people and also help kick start debates in the media, as well as within the corridors of power. Traditional societies in Nigeria have employed protests in airing their dissatisfaction since the

colonial era. Examples of such are the Abeokuta protest of 1946 and the Aba women war of 1929 (Allen, 1975; Ina, 1992; Okonkwo, 1998; Byfield, 2007). Both were uprising against excruciating tax imposition by the colonial government of the period. In modern days, protests have been employed by Nigerians on many occasions to accentuate their grievances through public demonstrations and civil disobedience. The most significant among such protests are June-12 post-election protests, several Labor Union protests, Occupy Nigeria and the most recent, which is the EndSars protest (Hari, 2014; Olowojolu, 2015; Oloyede and Elega, 2019).

Apart from staging street protests, music has always served as a medium of protest within the geo-political landscape of Nigeria. Not only has music continued to feature in protest marches, but it has also been utilized by popular artistes to demand accountability and good governance from the seats of power and as well, sensitize the masses on their political rights. In addition, protest music helps in the sensitization of the masses regarding their obligations towards the government. This has helped in strengthening the Nigerian democratic process. Such popular artistes include but are not limited to Fela Kuti, Majek Fashek, Eedris Abdulkareem, Bisade Ologunde (Lagbaja), Segun Akinlolu (Beautiful Nubia), Sunny Okosun, Chinagorom Onuoha (African China), Innocent Idibia (2face), Wasiu Ayinde (Kwam 1) and Taiwo Oluseyi (Bembe Aladisa).

Scholars have engaged the study of protests in Nigeria from various viewpoints, with attention given to protest marches (Chiluwa and Ifukor, 2015; Uwalaka and Watkins, 2018; Uwazuruike, 2020), as well as the use of music as a medium of protest (Titus, 2017; Akpakpan and Abur-Ngogyo, 2019; Owoaje and Sofola, 2020). However, despite the wide range of literature on protests in Nigeria, none has attempted to engage music activism in evaluating two decades of uninterrupted democracy in Nigeria since the restoration of democratic governance in 1999, till date. This

article, therefore, investigates music activism in evaluating the political landscape of Nigeria's two decades of uninterrupted democracy after a series of power seizures by various military leaders. The study and evaluation of music activism in the two decades since the restoration of Nigeria's democracy is important in assessing the merits and demerits of democratic governance in Nigeria. This article will also expand knowledge in the study of protests in Nigeria and music activism.

For the purpose of analytical discussion, three Nigerian protest songs - Wasiu Ayinde (Fact), Sound Sultan (Light up) and Eedris Abdulkareem (Jagajaga reloaded) were purposively selected for content analysis. Apart from the selected artistes being prominent Nigerian popular musicians whose voices represent a vast amount of the masses, the three songs capture the position of the artistes on the four Nigerian democratic governments from 1999 to date.

Conceptualizing Music Activism

Music activism is an active campaign geared towards achieving a political or social goal through the use of music as an instrument of expression. The use of music in this regard has been established by literature as a global practice. For instance, Rejai and Phillips (2001) claimed that various political views like racism, anarchism and democracy had been expressed throughout history using music. Scholars have also stressed the use of various musical styles in fashioning political identity, as well as supporting social and political demands (Leung and Kier, 2008; Omojola, 2012). Music activism has been figured in the creation of several popular genres such as hip-hop, rock, heavy metal and rap.

The literature surrounding the creation of hip-hop and rap, for example, have traced their creation to poor urban black people in the United States around the 1970s. These people created hip-hop and rap as a medium through which they expressed their discontent concerning their penurious state and the dearth of opportunities that could make their lives

better (Trapp 2005, Taylor and Taylor 2007). According to Bennett (1999), hip-hop and rap have both been employed to address local issues like police harassment, unemployment, racism and the rights of the people in Germany and England. Similarly, Frith (1992) linked rock music with cultural expression -aesthetic and political. Eyerman and Jamison (1998) also linked rock music with the 'revolutionary quest for liberation' (p. 141). Within the Nigerian context, Fela Anikulapo Kuti's afro beat was also a form of music activism. Fela employed music as a medium of expression, through which he addressed political and social issues in Nigeria and Africa.

Theoretical anchorage

The discussion of two decades of music activism against bad governance in Nigeria is anchored on relative deprivation, a social movement theory that suggests that people join social movements when they feel deprived of what they consider essential in their society. This happens when members of a society see other people enjoying economic resources, status and power, to which they lack access. They, therefore, start up or join social movements which are geared towards obtaining the resources and power from which they feel deprived (Longley, 2020). Relative deprivation has been said to be one of the causes of the United States Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, being rooted in the struggle of Black Americans to gain social and legal equality with their white counterparts (Ibid). In Marx's explanation, relative deprivation explains social behaviour wherein comparisons to other people in a given society makes people believe that they do not possess what they deserve. This, in turn, can make them angry and then lead to protest (Marx, 1947).

Relative deprivation was developed by Robert K. Merton, an American sociologist whose studies revealed that soldiers in the Military Police were far less satisfied with opportunities for promotion than regular GIs during the Second World War. The theory has been critiqued for not

explaining why some people fail to take part in social movement, despite being deprived. However, proponents of the theory gave argued that avoidance of conflict and life's difficulties are responsible for their refusal to take part in social movements (Ibid). Engaging the medium of music by the selected artistes to demand good governance from the various Nigerian governments is a reflection of the relative deprivation faced by the masses to which they belong and also represent, in the midst of corruption, ethnic bigotry, unemployment, insecurity and other social and political challenges that have made life unstable for them.

Profile of selected artistes

Wasiu Ayinde

Wasiu Ayinde, popularly known as KWAM 1 (K1 De Ultimate), is a Nigerian popular *Fuji* artiste. He was born on March 3rd, 1957, as Wasiu Adewale Omogbolahan in the Agarawu area of Lagos Island. Although he was born in Lagos, his father hailed from Ijebu Ode while his mother hailed from Ilupeju, Ondo state. Wasiu discovered his musical talent at the age of eight and started his career at the tender age of fifteen when he won several musical competitions in Lagos. He was a member of Sikiru Ayinde Barrister's band, through which he was mentored by Barrister himself. Ayinde is a prolific recording artiste who has continued to upgrade his *Fuji* with the fusion of dance styles from *Juju* and *Apala*. He is known for incorporating Western instruments such as keyboard, guitar and saxophone into his *Fuji* music. Ayinde's music has increasingly focused on trending styles in the Nigerian soundscape, thereby carrying along his initial audience and the contemporary youth population. He has to his credit over fifty albums, starting from his first - *Abode Mecca* in 1979 and his most recent *Fuji the sound* in 2021. He has received several music awards, such as the 'Headies Hall Of Fame' award in 2013.

Sound Sultan

Born Olanrewaju Abdul-Ganiu Fasasi, Sound Sultan was born in Jos, Plateau state, on the 27th of November, 1976. He is the fourth of the six children of Mr Liadi Alarape Fasasi and Mrs Adeyinka Ajarat Fasasi. For his primary education, he attended Stepping Stone Nursery and Primary School and later proceeded to Federal Government College Ogbomosho between 1988 and 1993 for his secondary education. In 1999, he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Geography and Regional Planning from Lagos State University. Until his death on Sunday 11 July 2021, Sound Sultan was an award-winning rapper, songwriter, actor and singer, comedian and recording artist. In addition to his musical career, Sultan was a basketball player, a businessman and a United Nations peace Ambassador. He is a co-owner of Lagos City Stars basketball club. He had to his credit, at least fourteen albums. He was a winner of several music awards, such as Amen Awards for the Best Afro Song in 2005 and Headies Award for the Best Contemporary Song in 2018.

Eedris Abdulkareem

Eedris Abdulkareem Ajenifuja is a Nigerian hip hop artiste who was born in Kano on 24th December 1974. His father was from Ilesha, Osun State, while his mother was from Ogun State. He attended Army Day secondary school in Kano. He started his music career in 1996 as a hip hop rapper and got signed to Kennis Music alongside other popular Nigerian artistes such as Innocent Idibia (2Face). Abdulkareem is popularly known for his rap in Nigerian pidgin, with which he criticizes corruption and bad governance in Nigeria. In 2002, Abdulkareem released his first album titled *Pass*. He later released *Mr Lecturer*, a track he employed in addressing sexual harassment of students by lecturers of higher institutions in Nigeria. In 2004, he released another album titled *Jagajaga*, a more controversial artistic output with which he addressed corruption and the state of suffering by the Nigerian masses.

He created his own record label 'Lakreem Music' in 2005, through which he released his fourth album, *Letter to Mr President*. He used the album to address Obasanjo's critique and ban on his song *Jaga jaga*. He also used the album to pay tribute to Stella Obasanjo, the wife of the then President Obasanjo, who died after undergoing surgery. In addition, he used the album to pay tribute to victims of the Bellview Airline crash. His latest song *Jagajaga reloaded,* which forms part of the discourse of this article, was released in 2021.

Wasiu Ayinde's evaluation of the government of Olusegun Obasanjo

Wasiu Ayinde released the song track *Fact* in the year 2005, six years into the tenure of former President Olusegun Obasanjo. He employed the song, which was recorded in a live performance, as a medium to express his dissatisfaction concerning the ineptitude of the various arms of the Nigerian government, especially those of the southwestern states and the federation. It is of importance to note that Wasiu Ayinde had earlier in 1999, released a song with which he sought support for the Olusegun Obasanjo led federal government, being a democratic administration. Through this song, as shown below, he urged patriotic citizens to give the government enough time to enable it strategise and come up with life-changing decisions, projects and policies that would make the country a better place than it had been during the various military regimes.

E je ki baba o sanjo;	Allow the president to perform; Allow him
Ki baba o sanjo o;	to restore the nation's glory;
Ki gbogbo nnkan le yi pada o	That there may be positive change

This is in cognizance of his experience of democratic governance, which was in place at independence before the polity was hijacked through various military coups. Having experienced the Obasanjo administration, which was in its second tenure at the time, and its inability to live up to the expectation of the electorates, Ayinde considered it necessary to lend his

voice against the administration, based on the state of the nation at the time. He also did this to withdraw the support which he had thrown behind the Obasanjo government at inception.

In order to situate his intended message in context, he employed a bit of historical approach, which saw him discuss the effort of foremost nationalists who fought hard to ensure that Nigeria got independence from her colonialists in 1960 in order to democratically govern herself from within. Such nationalists, according to Ayinde, include Obafemi Awolowo, Samuel Ladoke Akintola, Adegoke Adelabu (also known as Peculiar mess) and several other great political leaders across Nigeria. Ayinde's reference to these three individuals who are Yoruba political leaders may have been a deliberate attempt to prepare the ground for comparison between their political gains and that of Olusegun Obasanjo, whose performance he expected should have built on the gains of the foremost nationalists. Furthermore, in his attempt to create a solid background for his critique of the Obasanjo government, Ayinde described the importance of democratic governance and good leadership as against the dynamics of military rule. He described military governance as that which does not prioritize human rights since it is not instituted by the people themselves. According to him, leadership, especially as it has to do with democracy, entails brainstorming for the purpose of arriving at practical solutions to the problems of the masses and respect for human rights.

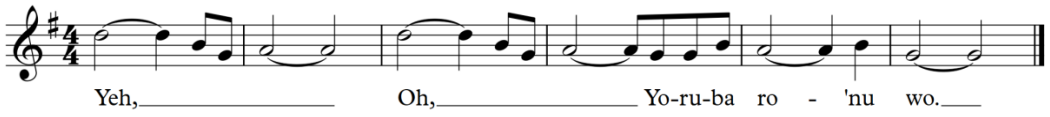
Ayinde equated political leadership to family structure, where every member has specific roles to play. It is against this backdrop that Ayinde hit the point of his critique, expressing his loss of confidence in the government of Olusegun Obasanjo, which had earlier promised to fix electricity in two years. He lamented the lack of jobs and opportunities for young individuals, poor health care system, poor electricity supply and inadequate distribution of common wealth, bad roads, dwindling economy, corruption, insecurity and poor standard of living among Nigerians. In

order to invalidate excuses and blaming of previous governments, Ayinde advised the President to take a trip from Abuja to Lagos and continue through Badagry to the Republic of Benin, Togo and Ghana, where he would get a clear picture of good leadership, human rights and dividends of democracy. He used these West African countries as models for good leadership, based on the experience he had during his stay there, especially in Ghana. He recalled how the countries had made tremendous progress, especially regarding electricity generation and distribution.

Comparing the availability of power supply in Nigeria with other West African countries, Ayinde employed ethnographic procedure in narrating his experience concerning the lack of electricity and good roads in Nigeria. While calling on the governors of the southwest to rise up to their responsibility, he narrated his experience while he drove from Muritala Muhammed international airport, Lagos, to his home in Okota Lagos, and later to Ibadan. He lamented the poor state of the roads, which were full of pot-holes. Secondly, he decried the darkness he experienced in Ibadan at the time due to the erratic power supply. Having hit the point of his intended message, Ayinde parodied the song with which he solicited support for the Obasanjo-led federal government (as shown below), this time around, praying to God to remove the President, the same way General Sanni Abacha died during his reign as a military Head of State in Nigeria, a position he attained through a coup. Ayinde's prayer to God is not far-fetched from the fact that a democratically elected president in Nigeria can only be removed by death or the national assembly.

E ba wa mu baba kuro	Help us remove the President
Ara n ni gbogbo ara ile	The masses are suffering

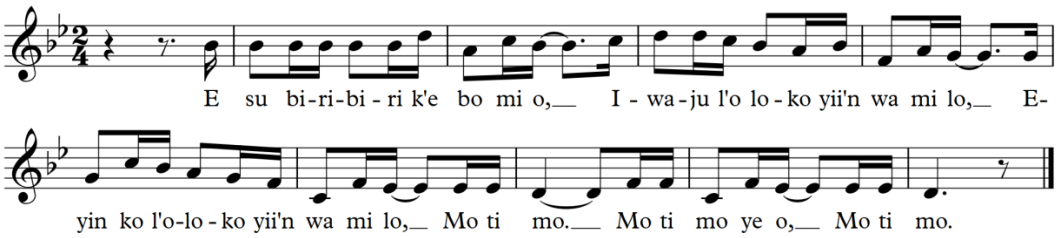
Knowing that the national assembly may not be a reality when it comes to impeaching a sitting president based on inefficiency, he believed only God has the power to grant his wish.

One important element that empowers Ayinde's critique of the Obasanjo administration in the song track under review is his infusion of prior music materials from two notable foremost Yoruba musicians – Hubert Adedeji Ogunde and King Sunny Ade, as well as two other short songs from Mainframe production's *Saworo ide*. Ogunde's *Yoruba ronu* was released in the year 1964, following events in the political landscape of the old Western Region, which was characterized by strife among the Yoruba elites and politicians.

Yee yee yee	Yeh yeh yeh
Oo ooo ooo	Oo ooo ooo
Yoruba ronu wo!	Think, Yoruba nation!

Ogunde, therefore, used the song to caution Yoruba elites and politicians against such acts as betrayal and desperation for power, which he considered unhealthy for the growth and development of the Yoruba nation. Ayinde employed this song in order to connect his critique with history, calling upon Yoruba leaders to call the President to order so that the Yoruba nation does not lose the opportunity of another presidential turn, owing to the inefficiencies of Olusegun Obasanjo as President. The second song, *mo ti mo* (now I know) by King Sunny Ade, is an updated version of *mi o mo* (I do not know). Sunny Ade had earlier sung *mi o mo,* as shown below.

E su biribiri e bo mi o	Form a circle around me
Bi'waju l'oloko yii n wa mi lo	Whether I am being driven forward
B'ehin ba l'oloko yii n wa mi lo	Or this paddler is driving me backwards

Mi o mo e o, mi o mo	I don't know, yes, I don't know

Perhaps after criticism or personal reflection on the texts of the song, which could signify instability or lack of direction, Sunny Ade updated the song to *Mo ti mo*, which was then released in his 1983 album *Apala syncro.*

E su biribiri e bo mi o	Form a circle around me
Iwaju l'oloko yii n wa mi lo	The paddler is driving me forward
Eyin ko l'oloko yii n wa mi lo	I am not being paddled backwards
Mo ti mo e o, mo ti mo	Now, I know, yes, I know

The significance of this song in Ayinde's musico-political discussion lies in its affirmation of progress, implying that the citizenry has first-hand knowledge of what is obtainable in other countries regarding development and that they have chosen to progress, rather than bearing with a president whose leadership style had dragged the country back among developing nations. The two songs from Mainframe's *Saworo ide* are *ko i ye won, yoo ye won l'ola* (They seem not to understand the message yet; they will get it in the future) and *eye o deede ba l'orule o, oro l'eye n gbo o* (A bird does not accidentally land on the roof top; it must have heard some words). These two songs are used corroboratively among the Yoruba to back their admonition to individuals, especially if they seem not ready to ruminate over such advice.

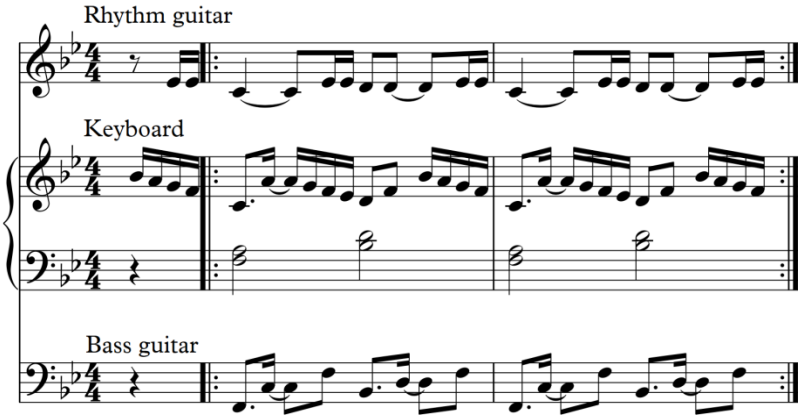
It is necessary to deduce at this point that Ayinde's outburst was a reflection of the effect of the political ecology of the nation on the citizenry

to which he belongs. The impact of good and bad governance is felt by all. Regardless of social class, every citizen plies the roads and experiences delays and accidents caused by their bad state. They likewise buy food and other necessary commodities from the markets within the same economic topography. In addition, the attitude of the then President Olusegun Obasanjo to criticism and the manner in which he withheld the monthly allocations of states whose governors criticized him or had a dissenting view from his own also formed part of Wasiu Ayinde's critique. He acknowledged the fact that the President was known to respond and or use state institutions to deal with critics. It is on record that the Olusegun Obasanjo led government on September 4, 2004, used agents of the State Security Service (SSS) to break into the office of a Lagos-based newspaper *Insider Weekly*, carting away documents, equipment and money, while also detaining at least two of its employees for several days after which they were released without charge. In addition, the SSS also confiscated the newspaper's September 5 publication and sealed the entrance to the office. The SSS later issued a statement in which it accused the newspaper company of 'attacking, disparaging and humiliating the person and office of the President and commander-in-chief as well as some notable people in government' (Committee to protect journalists, 2004).

In order to justify its clampdown on the news outlet, the SSS listed articles published by *Insider Weekly*, which it alleged to have insulted or undermined the presidency. According to Committee to protect journalists (2004), one of the articles which were published on October 27, 2003, had compared President Olusegun Obasanjo to former military dictator General Sani Abacha. Another article also implied that President Obasanjo was making moves to amend the constitution to give room for his third term presidential ambition. It is also on record that the Olusegun Obasanjo led government in 2004 ordered the stoppage of statutory allocation to states that created new local government areas referred to as Local Council Development Authority (LCDA). While several other affected states

reverted to the old councils in order to get their allocations, the Lagos state government under the leadership of Bola Ahmed Tinubu remained resolute and kept running the affairs of the local government areas with zero allocation from the Obasanjo led federal government for several months.

Music activists, especially in developing democracies such as Nigeria, try to avoid confrontation with the government by embedding their message in sarcasm and satire. The message contained therein is then expected to be decoded by their intended audience. This is not so in the case of Wasiu Ayinde, who employed a confrontation approach in his critique of the Obasanjo administration. Despite his knowledge of the Obasanjo government's fire brigade approach against critics and criticism, he went ahead to invite the President for a debate if he would like to prove that his position regarding the state of the nation was inappropriate. In doing this, however, Ayinde also employed a diplomatic guise to discourage the President from using state force, but rather, engage him in a critical evidence-based debate.

Wasiu Ayinde's *Fact* employs the use of logogenic narrative vocal technique, which is laid upon one of his popular V – I ostinato chord progressions played in moderate tempo, as shown below. While the keyboard continues to ornament the chord progression into two flowing melodic phrases, the bass guitar grounds the flow into the chordal framework of V – I. The rhythm guitar provides a syncopated melo-rhythm flow that further enriches the V – I chord progression.

The alto saxophone, as employed in the music, plays dual roles. First, it plays more than one interjectory solo and also provides the lead singer with corroborative songs, which were discussed earlier. It introduces such songs when appropriate in order to situate the lead singer's message within existing popular songs with similar thematic textual materials. The saxophone is, therefore, both a solo instrument and a commentator. Having been established on a moderate tempo, the percussion instruments, comprising of the trap set, *agogo*, *omele* and led by the *gangan* talking drum, provide a light rhythmic accompaniment at this session. As the style changes and approaches the original fast tempo *fuji* style, the percussion instruments start to dominate the performance, reducing the role of the Western instruments.

Sound Sultan's Light up Naija (Vision 2010)

When we ask our government o
When dem go give us light (When will they give us stable power supply?)
Dem say na 2010 (They said year 2010)
We don dey wait 2010 since then (We've been waiting for 2010 since then)
But now the waiting must end
Cuz 2010 don show oh oh oh (Because it's almost 2010)

I want to be like Moses eh

Show my people dem to the promise land
But then I notice something
People wey try am don dey underground (People who tried it are long dead)
I see dem I ja (I see them and flee)
Look dem from far (Look at them from afar)
Me I fear this government people (I fear these politicians in government)
Rise up Naija (Rise up Nigeria)
Raise your apa (Raise your hands)
Tell them you are tired of the evil

E don tey wen Fela don go o (Fela is long gone)
E don tey wen Fela don know o (Fela knew this a long time ago)
Say the leaders are after the doe (That the leaders are after the nation's wealth)
Choose themselves like mini mani mo (Chose themselves through hoax elections)
Tumbo tumbo baskelebe
See dem eye like dey shak kelebe
See dem pickin dey comot kelebe (They amass more than they will ever need)
Poor man pickin dey rush olele (Poor man's children continue to struggle)

I see dem I ja.... (I see them and flee)

Gbogbo owo lo n kolobi (They keep embezzling public funds) Won de TV won o soro gidi (They go on TV and tell lies)
Se 'wo ni s'emi ni a mo na gidi (We don't know whom to trust) We dey follow follow dem like zombie (We continue following them like zombie)
Shey na today, na today
Wey we dey wait we dey wait (Is it today we started to wait?)

Go buy candle, go buy candle
E lo r'abela e lo r'abela o (Go and buy candle)

I see dem I ja.... (I see them and flee)

The background to Sound Sultan's *Light up* cannot be well understood unless one swerves a bit into the 2009 'Light up Naija' campaign and the Nigerian government's 'Vision 2010'. 'Light up Naija' was a youth initiative that was driven online to demand the improvement of electricity in Nigeria. The 'Vision 2010' was initiated by the late General Sanni Abacha, a military Head of State who governed Nigeria between November 17, 1993, and June 8, 1998. The Vision's committee was set up on 27th November 1996 to design a developmental blueprint that would lead the nation from its current state into a democratically-stable and economically prosperous nation within a period of about fourteen (14) years. According to Ujah (2019), the committee was headed by the former Head of the Interim National Government, Chief Ernest Shonekan. It had about 248 persons, which included twenty-five (25) foreigners, all of whom were selected from various sectors of the economy across the country.

In order to achieve their goal, members of the committee worked together in Abuja for about ten months. The goal of the Vision 2010 was to ensure that Nigeria transformed into a 'united, industrious, caring and God-fearing democratic society, committed to making the basic needs of life affordable for everyone and creating Africa's leading economy' (Ujah, 2019). Stable power supply was also part of the Vision 2010, being the key driver of industrialization and economic boom. The Light up Naija campaign was therefore aimed at reminding the government of the need to provide stable electricity, in line with the Vision 2010 blueprint. The Light up Naija campaign employed the use of internet platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to ensure their intended message was delivered to the government, using the hash tag #Lightupnaija.

In an interview with NigbatiTV on October 1st, 2020, Sound Sultan revealed the events surrounding the creation of the song. His associates

had beckoned on him to lend his voice to the *Light up Naija* movement via his social media handles while the campaign was going on. He, however, decided to explore the communicative and expressive medium of music for such campaign, which he believed would better get the intended message delivered to the appropriate authorities, bearing in mind that Obasanjo's government had earlier promised to fix electricity in its second term which ended in the year 2007. Umar Musa Yar'adua and Goodluck Jonathan came on board in 2007 and also promised the electorates stable electricity by 2010. Goodluck Jonathan took over governance in 2010 after the death of his principal, Umar Musa Yar'adua, while the government proceeded on a 'Medium Term Implementation Plan' (2010 – 2013), which targeted the generation of 16,000MW of electricity by 2013. Sound Sultan, in the interview, revealed that he personally took CD copies of the song to offices of politicians in government, managing to get it to the office of the Vice President of Nigeria.

Despite his effort in ensuring that the government is reminded of its Visions, Sound Sultan regretted the fact that nothing had improved a decade after releasing the song. According to him, 'The song has continued to be of economic benefit since it situates into the present condition of the country. It is, however, appalling that the country has not moved forward since the release of the song ten years ago'. The problem of insufficient electricity supply in Nigeria is an age-long problem, which cuts across various administrations. For instance, the Obasanjo administration spent $16 billion on the Nigerian power sector, without anything to show for it. In an article published by Voice of America in 2009, the Nigerian House of Representatives opened a probe into the fund spent on the power sector. It is not clear if the investigation became a reality. The same issue still formed part of the discourse of the Nigerian political ecology after a decade. An article published by Sahara Reporters on 13th February, 2019 also reported the Buhari administration's

intention to probe the same power project. According to the report, President Buhari had said that 'his government would do everything possible to recover the money and uncover those behind the scam'. Although the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) started an investigation in regards to the project, it has not published any findings or outcomes of the investigation.

Apart from addressing the need for the government to provide stable electricity, Sound Sultan tried to touch on the corrupt practice of Nigerian politicians, an important factor that has made it difficult for the government to achieve any long term goals or visions. He, therefore, called the people of Nigeria to action, advising them to rise up and demand good governance while also educating them on the importance of mass action in realizing good governance. He tried to make them realize that reliance on activists, especially musicians, to lead protests is like playing the Moses' card without expectation or assurance of Moses' miracles. He employed a gentleman approach in selecting the texts of the song, which according to him, was an attempt to save the image of the country, even while the intended message was being passed. The music combines singing with rap, featuring M. I. Abaga, a Nigerian rapper in a Nigerian hip hop style with the use of virtual instruments. It consists of multiple verses and a rap session.

Sound Sultan's message is conveyed musically through a multi-verse song structure with a chorused refrain which is featured after each of the verses. Forming part of the verse is the rap sessions that feature independently and as overlapping to some of the song verses. In addition to the sung verses and rap is the heightened vocal overlap that runs through the entire music. The song is situated within the simple quadruple time signature wherein the synthetic bass drum and a side drum provide the timeline, accompanied by synthetic strings and the bass guitar in a vi-IV-V chord progression.

Eedris Abdulkareem's Jagajaga reloaded

Jagajaga reloaded
Eedris Abdulkareem
It's been twenty year, Nigeria's still jagajaga
This na (is) democracy military
Government don send (has sent) soldiers out
Kill plenty Lagosians
Wey come out protest for toll gate (That came to protest at the toll gate)
Kill people for (in) Rivers state
Wey dem call am Obigbo o (Obigbo in Rivers state)
Army dey shoot people papa (The army killed people's fathers) Police dey kill people mama (The police killed people's mothers)
This no be military regime o (This is not a military regime) Buhari remember say you walk (Buhari remember that you once protested)
Restructure Nigeria
Monkey no go work make Baboon dey chop (A section of the country should not feed on others)
Federalism na im wey we want (We want federalism)
Your ojoro don too much (Enough of your lopsidedness) Religion and nepotism
Na the problem wey you get (Those are your problems)

Jagajaga eh, everything scatter scatter eh
Poor man still dey suffer suffer eh (Poor man keep suffering) Kosa!
Kosa! Gun shot una dey hear (That is the sound of gun) No more police brutality
Everything jagajaga eh
Poor man still dey suffer suffer eh
Kosa! Kosa! Gun shot una dey hear
First of all they tell us say …

Abdulkareem's Jagajaga reloaded is anchored upon three issues bedevilling the Nigerian state. First is the tyrannical flavour of the Buhari administration, which is exemplified in the Lekki toll gate massacre, which was the climax of the EndSars street protests, as well as other such occurences.

The second issue is the hiding of palliatives meant for citizens during the Covid-19 lockdown, while the third issue addressed in the song is the underdeveloped state of the country, compared to 2004 when he released *Jagajaga*. The EndSars movement has remained a significant event in the history of Nigeria. One of its effects is the unmasking of the maturity level of Nigeria's democracy. Democratic governance is people orientated, as it provides citizens with the right to protest whenever they are aggrieved concerning unfavourable policies of the government. In addition, the police are saddled with the responsibility of maintaining law and order while protest marches are on, ensuring the protest marches are not hijacked by hoodlums. This was not so in Nigeria during the EndSars protests, as officers of the Nigerian police came out fully armed, shot and killed protesters in some parts of the country for several days, especially in Lagos. The height of it was the events that took place at Lekki toll gate on October 20, 2020, where the Nigerian military was alleged to have opened fire on protesters using live ammunition, thereby causing the death of several Nigerian youths.

Although the shooting was streamed live on various social media platforms, with thousands of people watching as the events unfolded, especially through the *Instagram* handle of Miss Obianuju Catherine Udeh, popularly known as DJ Switch, the Nigerian minister of information referred to it as being *photoshopped*, and therefore, denied the gory event. Several denials and inconsistency by the Nigerian military and the government has followed the event, even as ongoing investigation points to the reality of the massacre. With this event, Abdulkareem describes Nigerian democracy as 'Democracy Military', a position which is almost impossible to challenge based on happenings in and around Nigeria. The antecedent to the military face of Nigerian democracy between 1999 and 2021 could be traced to the Odi1 massacre, which happened on November 20, 1999, during President Obasanjo's administration. The military tried to

justify its action, laying claim to an ambush that was laid to prevent it from entering the town after armed militias in the town had murdered twelve police officers. Nearly 2500 civilians were killed, with every house in the town burned down. The only buildings left in the town were the Anglican Church and the only bank in the town (Duru, 2010; Duru and Ogbonnaya 2012; Kanu, 2017). Whether there should have been such aggression by the military against a civilian population in a democracy has remained an unanswered question. However, it has remained an antecedent to several of such events such as the Zaria massacre[2], IPOB massacre,[3] Obigbo massacre[4] and Lekki Massacre under the Muhammadu Buhari administration.

The second issue raised by Abdulkareem has to do with the Covid-19 experience. It was discovered that some Nigerian state governments hid palliatives that were meant to be distributed to their people during the Covid-19 lockdown in warehouses. The first discovery was in Lagos, where loads of such food items were discovered in a warehouse in Maza maza, Lagos, on 22nd October 2020. Prior to this time, Nigerian citizens had been forced to remain indoors during the lockdown, with thousands losing their source of livelihood, while food items that should cater for them remained stored in warehouses by the government (See Yunusa et al, 2020 for the effects of Covid-19 lockdown on the Nigerian economy). Several other warehouses stocked with food items meant for the masses were later discovered in other locations, such as the palace of the Oba of Lagos, airport road in Ilorin, Kwara state and Ede in Osun state. Not only were these warehouses discovered, but they were also looted by hungry citizens, while a number of people suffered injuries during the food rush. This act is not only wicked considering the state of the economy at the time; it is completely against humanity. A government that is meant to ensure the welfare of its citizens is found neglecting them in their time of need, even when resources that could alleviate their suffering were readily available.

The events that followed the Lekki Massacre and the EndSars physical protests were various undemocratic attempts to criminalize protests and as well regulate the use of social media among Nigerians. All of these were aimed at muzzling the voices of the Nigerian people. Bank accounts of perceived leaders of the EndSars movement were frozen without a court order, while crypto-currency, which served as a decentralised medium of funding during the protest matches, was banned by the Apex bank. Social media played a huge role in the successful execution of the EndSars protests, especially Twitter, a micro-blogging platform that has been used extensively by Nigerians as a political tool in reaching out to the government and sensitizing the masses. It has also been used to attract international attention to local issues bordering the Nigerian people. The Nigerian government finally found an opportunity to ban the use of Twitter in Nigeria after Twitter removed an alleged genocidal tweet from the Nigerian President's personal handle on the 2nd of June, 2021. Thousands of Nigerians had reported the tweet as being inappropriate for public consumption, thereby causing its removal by Twitter. The Nigerian attorney-general and Minister for justice then outlawed the use of Twitter by Nigerians who bypassed the Nigerian firewall through Virtual Private Network (VPN), failing to state the section of the Nigerian constitution that backed his position[5]. This act is dictatorial since the power to make laws is vested in the National assembly and not in the executive council.

At the beginning of *Jagajaga reloaded*, Abdulkareem presents a comparison between the state of Nigeria in 2004 and the state of things in 2021 under the Buhari administration. He had used *Jagajaga* (2004) to address corruption, the use of force against civilians by the police and military, the institutionalisation of poverty for political control, insecurity and lack of the rule of law. Two decades later, the issues he addressed still persist within the political ecology, even in a new dimension. Nigeria has gradually drifted into a failed state under the Mohammadu Buhari

administration, where insecurity claims tens of lives on a daily basis, with security forces appearing incapacitated. This is coupled with the disruption of the economy caused by incessant corruption, ethnic bigotry and nepotism. It is worthy of note that Abdulkareem did not only highlight the problems facing the Nigerian state. He aligns with the masses in demanding federalism which he believes will enable every geo-political unit to control its resources and develop independently, rather than the current unitary style in which the federal government accumulates resources from every region and shares based on the population of states, which has continued to encourage looting, insecurity, nepotism and the call for self-determination by certain ethnic groups in the country. Apart from this, he presents two other options – restructuring and referendum, in order to douse the tension that has built up as a result of the leadership style of the president.

Abdulkareem situates *Jagajaga reloaded* within the rhythmic framework of raga, being the rhythmic background of *Jagajaga,* which he had released earlier. The song is structured in verses and chorused refrain, with the verses being in call and response form. It also features two rap sessions. The first rap session is taken by Abdulkareem himself, while the second rap session is taken by the Nigerian rapper, Mr Raw Madarocker. All of these versification and the rap sessions are performed within a vi – V chord progression, which is articulated by the piano and the bass guitar. It also features a heightened male overlap[6] that runs through the entire track.

Conclusion

The roles of musicians in society cannot be underemphasized. They occupy an important place within the social structure, functioning as entertainers, educators, therapists and social commentators. Apart from these, musicians function as activists, employing the communicative and expressive powers of music to protest imbalances and as well represent the voice of the

masses to demonstrate their grievances against the government's unfavourable policies, actions and inactions. The three artistes selected for this article employed the medium of music to represent the voices of the masses in decrying the government's deficiency in providing a flourishing environment for growth and development, respect for the rule of law, protection and basic social amenities for the citizenry.

Music activism has continued to thrive in Nigeria since the same problems that have been affecting the Nigerian masses have remained persistent for decades. The social and political problems facing Nigeria led Fela Anikulapo Kuti, for instance, into using his Afro-beat to address political and social issues. He sang about police and military brutality during his active music career, and more than two decades after his demise, the problem still persists so much that it led to a nationwide protest in the year 2020. This is why music activism has continued to thrive in Nigeria. In as much as music activism may not have recorded tremendous success within the Nigerian political landscape, it has helped to kick-start debates in the media, forcing the government to react either positively or negatively. The Nigerian political leaders should endeavour to lead the country towards a genuine developmental path in order to provide citizens with basic infrastructural and social amenities.

Notes

1. Odi is a town in Bayelsa state, Nigeria.
2. Zaria massacre was carried out by the Nigerian military on December 12, 2015. The military opened fire on protesting members of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria who were demanding the release of their leader Sheikh Ibrahim al-Zakzaky, were alleged to have blocked the convoy of the then Army chief General Tukur Buratai. 348 civilians were allegedly gunned down by the military.
3. According to Amnesty International, Nigerian security forces led by the military embarked on extrajudicial killing of at least 150 peaceful pro-Biafra protesters in the south-east of the country.

4. Mass killing by the Nigerian military was carried out in Obigbo and its environs in Rivers state, when Gov. Nyesom Wike imposed a curfew in Oyigbo local government area between 21st October and 4th November 2020. An estimate of about fifty people was killed, while about eighty were injured.

5. According to Premium Times publication of June 5, 2021, The office of the Attorney general of the federation maintained that 'Nigerians still using Twitter will know the law the're violating when charged to court. However, there has been no news of any arrest or intimidation based on the use of Twitter via VPN.

6. A kind of voicing done with a male voice at its highest speech, in a somewhat shouting manner, which overlaps the main song.

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Problematising Marxist Praxis in the Coming of Age of Postcolonial Nigerian Drama: A Discursive Critique of Soji Cole's *Embers*

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Abstract

This paper appraises Soji Cole's praxis in *Embers*, a 21st century Nigerian play which qualifies as a significant contribution to Marxist writing in modern Nigerian drama. It presents the major statements which the play makes from the perspectives of scientific Marxism and revolutionary Marxism with the aim of problematising the message which the play offers.

Keywords: Nigeria, EndSARS protest, Boko Haram, revolutionary Marxism, and Nigerian proletarians

Wole Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forest* (1960) signals a galvanising start-up of postcolonial Nigerian drama's disapprobation of, to use Chinua Achebe's phrasing, 'the trouble with Nigeria'—political leadership crisis. Because it ridicules the euphoria of Nigeria's political independence from British imperial rule, Ogunba (1971) identifies the play, which is Soyinka's theatrical landmark, as a satirical play (p. 104). With a sharp metaphor, Soyinka nudges the nationalists cum leaders of the just begotten Nigeria to a re-cogitation of the statutory fabrics that compose the new nation-state into frameworks that could translate to good living conditions for Nigerians and banish totalitarianism. The play's subject matter calculatedly set the sights against the euphoria of the moment by insisting on exploring, not the glorious achievements of the past, but its crimes and evils, suggesting thereby that the sort of 'new' beginnings

touted in independence from colonialism are fraught with unexorcised moral and psychic maladjustments (Jeyifo ii). The 'maladjustments' with their manifold destabilising corollaries remain in the present Nigerian nation space as it struggles for survival in a world of neoliberal capitalism.

Ola Rotimi uses *Kurunmi* (1971), and *Our Husband has Gone Mad Again* (1976), one which Johnson describes as a '… delightful, light-hearted comedy….' (p. 137) to respond to the self-destructive post-independence politics of the nationalist powers. Rotimi's oeuvre refracts and condemns inter alia ethnic jingoism and political failure to the end that Affiah remarks that the body of work presents an example whereby there is 'an interface between politics and literature' (p. 93). The vision of well-off living conditions for the Nigerian proletarians passes with an arresting acuity in the poetics of Femi Osofisan, one who is unarguably the most prolific playwright in Nigeria to date. Remarking on The Chattering and the Song and Morountodun, Garuba argues that 'Femi Osofisan in his plays strives as a subtle balance of traditional wisdom which stresses the repetitive nature of human experience and the historical dialectic of change' (p. 218). Garuba does not underscore the endpoint of the subtle balancing that Osofisan (also known as Okinba Launko) identifies with and projects the plights of the hapless societal underclass. The prolific playwright says:

> In the quest for an alternative to all this parasitism, I turn official historiography and mythopoeisy on their head, insisting on their hidden partisan agenda, and offer a dialectical counter-narrative, in which history is seen from the lower side, from the perspective of those who are society's victims. This is why female heroes are so prominent in my plays, since the empowerment of women is crucial to this prospective program of liberation and modernization (Osofisan 2001, p. 58).

The immediate target of the project is the Nigerian masses who had survived the buffeting of military governments, and whose alienated state

has not healed till date, even in a pseudo-democratic regime.

The literary outputs of Soyinka, Rotimi, and Osofisan represent the postcolonial Nigerian drama's mainstream formation which underlines socio-political commitment. To this end, Mao Tse-Tung's declaration that there is 'no such thing as art for art's sake' is a truistic axiom for this drama. From its beginning in the 1960s till date, the art, largely authored by Nigerians, primarily for Nigerian audiences, has been a politically committed art driven by clear-cut ideological formulations. Like Amuta's (2012) comments on African literature and its criticism, the postcolonial Nigerian drama and its criticism 'testify to the historical contradictions that define the African situation' (p. 7). This meta-critical point has been made in various contexts of this discourse (Onoge, 1974; Obafemi, 1996; and, Osakwe, 2014, to mention a few).

Even the female dramatists in the canon of modern Nigerian drama who are accustomed to using dramatic aesthetics to engage womenfolk's living conditions are not unbothered by the perennial socioeconomic doldrums of their country. For instance, Adeoti (2008) argues that Tess Onwueme's '*The Reign of Wazobia* denounces socio-cultural and political practices that encourage sexual inequality, especially in the public sphere' (p. 264). Onwueme uses the play to advocate for women's participation in politics. The same advocacy is still found in Osofisan's poetics which places the mandate of emancipation of the proletariat in the hands of women (as in *Morountodun and other Plays*). So, for the most part, the postcolonial Nigerian drama is functionalist.

Onoge compartmentalises the functionalist writers in Africa into 'critical realist' (e.g. Wole Soyinka) and 'socialist realist' (e.g. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Femi Osofisan). The critical realists advocate literature that is engaged with contemporary reality in a critical way and merely testifies to the condition of social crisis. At the same time, socialist-realist writers offer a precise diagnosis by identifying capitalist exploitation as the cause of this

crisis (Onoge, 1974, p. 402). He posits that these writers 'accept that these problems can be overcome only by the liquidation of the capitalist state' (p. 403).

This sensitivity in its accumulative ideological baggage endures even in this current stagflation. Soji Cole is a representative figure for this 21st century contemporary postcolonial Nigerian drama and Marxist cogitation. Born on 27 December 1976, Cole attended the University of Ibadan (for his undergraduate education) and the University of Roehampton (for his Graduate studies). He is the recipient of the 2018 edition of the prestigious NLNG award. According to Duru, his work *Embers* (2018), the primary object of this paper, 'emerged best out of 89 entries that qualified for the 2018 Nigeria Prize for Literature.' Though he is thoroughly schooled in the canon, Osofisan is his proximal contact and major influence. *Embers* is cast in thematic and dramaturgic parallel to Osofisan's *Once upon Four Robbers*, a play that critiques 'the decree promulgated by General Gowon's administration that made armed robbery punishable by public execution' (Ajidahun, 2012, p. 115). The latter is much of a launching pad for Osofisan, so is the former for Cole. Though they depart in contextual provenances as one is rooted in Yoruba oral tradition while the other is a composite of postcolonial Nigerian cultural modes. However, both do not just evince Marxist cogitations but qualify as approximations of earnest dramatic attempts at actuating a Marxist praxis. This paper interprets the praxis that *Embers* offers as a materialisation of revolutionary Marxism, problematises its feasibility within the Nigerian socio-political system and reconceptualises its thesis.

The Marxist formulation in the play is characterised by certain ideological statements from the perspectives of Marxist Feminism (in the expressions of Talatu), scientific Marxism (in the expressions of Talatu and Soldier; Cole, 2018, p. 3) and revolutionary Marxism (in the expressions of Memunah, Idayat and Soldier; Cole, 2018, p. 4). The

statements of revolutionary Marxism prognosticate the #EndSARS protest, which was held nationwide (and even in the Diasporas) in October 2020. The mass demonstrations, which were actuated by Nigerian youths, accentuated an end to police brutality, a malady amongst stark indices of sociopolitical oddities. The protest seats in the annals of Nigerian history as a notable attempt to demand accountability in governance. Unfortunately, it fell through. The prognostication is explicit in this excerpt:

> IDAYAT: Goggo, I am sorry. I think the option is simple. The system has to destroy itself to regenerate.
>
> TALATU: Leave that to the politicians, girl!
>
> MEMUNAH: The politicians will keep destroying us, Goggo. What we need now is revolution. A sweeping revolution!
>
> TALATU: Revolution also swallows the good. Like war, it can also destroy the innocents.
>
> IDAYAT: The innocents can be bystanders and watch as revolution sweeps.
>
> TALATU: Everything turns to fuel when fire rages. Let us continue to hope and pray to Allah for change.
>
> MEMUNAH: That's the lazy approach. Even God gets tired of too much hymn (Cole, 2018, p. 20—21).

In the canon of modern Nigerian drama, Soji Cole is not the first prognosticator of events that must but materialise. Ogunba declares: 'In this play [*A Dance of the Forest*] … the author is not only being satirical; he is being prophetic as well' (104). Indeed, at independence, Soyinka foresaw the reigns of military dictatorships in Nigeria, first of which is General Aguiyi Ironsi's regime, then the cruel General Sani Abacha's regime. Clark-Bekeremo in *The Raft* (1964) presents an allegory of political events that occurred in Nigeria between 1960 and 1966, which culminated in the Nigerian Civil War. But while the disjunctive raft in The Raft is discursively

a metaphor for a Nigeria at the precipice of disintegration (a reading that can only be implied as the author himself had once disclaimed), it is as if Cole had telepathised with the Nigerian youth collective. The statement: 'What we need now is revolution. A sweeping revolution' is currently the resolve of the Nigerian youth which Memunah, Idayat, and Atai represent.

Omoyele Sowore, a pro-democracy activist, has insistently been chorusing one mantra: #RevolutionNow and other vociferous voices of his generational cohort like the Deji Adeyanjus, Aisha Yesufus, Farook Kperogis, Joe Odumakins, etc. have given resounding volume to the clamour. They want to rout out the incumbent political elite. However, the collectivity has within its ranks, saboteurs, people like Atai, who hobnobs with the oppressors and frustrate the cause:

> IDAYAT: Ask her! She will not talk! Betrayers don't talk! Every other night she sneaks out of the camp to sleep with those politicians. We know; Memunah and I, but we have never breathed a word of that to anybody. But this one…, this girl sold us out. She was the one who told on Memunah! (Cole, 2018, p. 88).

Here, Idayat accuses Atai of sabotage. Idayat and Memunah have colluded with some Boko Haram members to blow off the IDP camp, the play's spatial setting, which is situated in the heart of Boko-Haram-crisis-stricken-north-eastern Nigeria.

Showcasing a complex ethnic composition of Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, Ibibio, etc., the camp is a metaphor for Nigeria, which is imploding on account of perennially unresolved social, cultural, economic, and political complexities. Branded as revolutionary, what Idayat considers as 'the system' destroying 'itself to regenerate'; blowing up the camp metaphorically refers to destroying the present predatory systems in Nigeria, and herein lies the praxis of the play. The collusion of the girls with some members of Boko Haram does not legitimise the activities of Boko Haram, nor does it absolve them as revolutionary. They are still the '…scoundrels {who} burnt down the whole school in the town when they

came to take {the Chibok girls} that night….' (Cole, 2018, p. 5). However, there is the extension of the referentiality of 'Boko Haram':

> IDAYAT: … The real Boko Haram is here, not in the forest of Sambisa. They are here with us every day. They live with you and me! The Boko Harams are those Government people who brought ten bags of rice to the camp and announced in the news that they came with hundred. The Boko Harams are those Camp Officers who steal seven out of those ten bags of rice and leave us with three to share for food. The Boko Harams are those in uniforms whose job is to keep us safe here but drag out the girls every night to have a fill of their lusty… (Cole, 2018, p. 20).

This elasticity of the referentiality underscores the multifarious predations in Nigerian society. Even the 'oppressed' (like the 'Camp Officers') prey on one another in their quest for survival. In the same manner, Osofisan denounces the military regime of the 1970s for creating the robbers in *Once upon Four Robbers*, Cole indicts the current Nigerian political class who work in syndicate with the Aristocrats in instigating a predatory polity where everybody is literally eating everybody—politicians eating the electorate, employers eating employees, senior staffers eating the junior ones, traders eating buyers, the clerics eating the congregants, lecturers eating students, etc. It is a complex web of predations of the Nigerian underclass. The predations are perpetually invigorated by insatiable vested interests, and the results are state failure and asphyxiating state capture.

Boko Haram menace, for instance, is a berserk group created by the food chain of North-Eastern Nigerian socio-political actors. There are other furious splinters of the group like the marauding herdsmen (whose perpetual onslaughts against hapless Nigerians are manifestations of the state's failure in 'managing its cows,' apology to Niyi Osundare). The predations continue to exacerbate what Jeyifo has described as Nigeria's dire security challenges: widespread banditry, kidnapping, ethnic and

communal clashes, armed robbery, rape and sexual violence against women and underage girls, religious and criminal insurgencies. Memunah says:

> MEMUNAH: … Nothing can heal our country. Nothing. Unless we destroy this system we will never regenerate. There is no future here until those who are leading us are completely destroyed. And it is my generation that can do that!" (Cole, 2018, p. 64).

This revolutionary corrective resonates in the tremors of revolution of the Omoyele Sowore and particularly in the virtual orientation that actuated the EndSARS protest. It is underpinned by the tenets of Marxism-Leninism, also known as revolutionary Marxism. Wilczynski (2019) highlights some of its tenets:

> … revolution must be organized and co-ordinated from above by fearless and uncompromising professionals. Spontaneous, isolated revolts and strikes by individual trade unions for higher wages and better working conditions are insufficient and may, in fact, be harmful; … a bourgeois-democratic revolution is only a step towards the PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION … a proletarian revolution can succeed in a few countries, or even one unindustrialized country (p. 315).

In the EndSARS protest, Nigerian youth gestured towards the kind of revolution described above, but they failed.

The protest ended with many casualties. President Muhammadu Buhari, in his nationwide broadcast, estimated that 69 persons (civilians, police officers, and soldiers) lost their lives to the protest. Different human activists and bodies, including Amnesty International, have contested the figures arguing that the actual number of lives lost to the protest is unknown. Danielle Paquette, in an article titled 'Why are people talking about Nigeria and #EndSARS?' published on *Washington Post,* writes: 'the Nigerian army opened fire on peaceful EndSARS protesters at the Lekki toll gate in Lagos State, Nigeria'. Known as the 'Lekki massacre,' an

unspecified number of the protesters died, and some of them are still missing. Such ruthlessness of President Buhari's regime in gagging remonstrant Nigerian populace is not new and has happened in several countries of the world. Jeyifo (2020) observes:

> All over the world, when frightened or panicky corrupt, repressive and authoritarian governments want to break up protests and demonstrations that threaten their rule or frighten them, they either use sections of their paramilitary forces or hired thugs and goons dressed in civies or in army or police uniforms. And even so, such governments often go to great lengths to hide their connection with those they send to kill and injure protesters. We were all witnesses to the endless but ultimately futile attempts of the Buhari administration to deny the fact that it was responsible for the massacres of protesters at the Lekki Tollgate during the #EndSARS demostrations…. (web)

Buhari's government repressed the agitators. Nothing changed, none of the agitations was met, and it seemed those who died and were maimed suffered in vain. Knowing this, only a masochistic thinker with a queer morbid fascination will, out of radical and sentimental humanism, not budge to the nudge of scientific humanism. Talatu represents the older generation that remains unabashedly reactionary. Her generation has for long yielded itself to some inuring philosophical equanimity – hoping on God ('Let us continue to hope and pray to Allah for change'), cautious of mass revolution ('…swallows the good…. Like war, it can also destroy the innocents'), and ceding the mandate of change to the political class ('Leave that to the politicians'). Scientific humanism holds a cautious ideology whose trepidations are genuine.

Moreover, if revolutionary Marxism, which is traceable to the early works of Karl Marx, is reduced as 'the Marxism of the head' because of its romanticisation of revolution, scientific Marxism (the collective of theoretical musings of *mature* Karl Marx) does not offer the Nigerian

society or its sociology a better alternative. Marx and Engels call it *scientific* to

> distinguish their revolutionary proletarian ideology from UTOPIAN SOCIALISM and its predecessors. They called it 'scientific', because in their view it has solid scientific foundations supported by the laws of social development and provides well-founded theoretical precepts for guiding the PROLETARIAT in replacing capitalism with SOCIALISM and ultimately FULL COMMUNISM. The main theoretical foundations of S.C. are: 1. DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM; 2. HISTORICAL MATERIALISM; 3. the LABOUR THEORY OF VALUE; 4. the postulates of the CLASS STRUGGLE, PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION, the DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT and ultimately, a CLASSLESS SOCIETY. Later Marxist thinkers, especially Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung, further developed s.c. on the basis of actual experience in the USSR, China and other Socialist countries (Wilczynski, 2019, p. 509).

We can point to the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), the Nigerian Labour Congress, and other professional bodies in Nigeria as organisations whose *modus operandi* are informed by scientific Marxism. With the level of state failure that Nigeria had seen in all aspects of its nationhood (particularly and most gruesomely in Education), scientific Marxism has not translated to meaningful progress the way it had done in Russia and China.

To this end, Marxism is piloting Nigerian society and, most pointedly, the postcolonial Nigerian drama at a dead end. I make this declaration bearing in mind that literature in itself is an aspect of the traditional configuration of any superstructure while the means of production and distribution, known as the major players of any historical materialism, coagulate as the base. So, in classical Marxist conceptualisation, postcolonial Nigerian drama belongs to the superstructure while the postcolonial Nigerian socio-political milieu with its

wide chasm between its predatory haves and have-nots is the base. That both (Nigerian drama and Nigerian society) are being navigated at a dead-end does not mean that we have to consign the most institutionalised theory in the Western academy to the recycle bin of Nigerian or African literary criticism. Rather, it should be bolstered by emerging theories of Marxist inflexions. Good examples of this practice are in *Routledge Handbook of African Literatur*e (2019) and *African Identities* (2020). Fyfe (2020) posits: 'Marxist criticism … has changed and developed in relation to a range of influences and has been adapted by a range of individual practitioners' (p. 7). Thus, while we may say that traditional Marxist theory has not appreciably addressed the Nigerian situation, Marxist criticism remains an insightful endeavour.

A Discursive Critique of the Marxist Praxis in Cole's *Embers*

Major voices of African Marxism are progressively rethinking traditional Marxist postulations by adding and not subtracting from the existing framework. Contemplating colonial trajectory, Frantz Fanon adds the thesis-antithesis-synthesis paradigm to the existing sociological analysis that has class contradiction as a predetermining factor. His famous publication *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) extensively offers practical precepts which the colonised and oppressed can take to acquire freedom from the oppressive colonisers. In a developing country (Nigeria being an example), experience proves that the important thing is not that three hundred people form a plan and decide upon carrying it out, but that the whole people plan and decide even if it takes them twice or three times as long, (Fanon, 1961, p. 155—156). The Fanonist ideology holds that humans and freedom are synonymous (Hansen 114). In other words, humans, by nature, can only be at ease when he or she is free. Because poverty is itself a shackle, the vast populace of Nigerians is not free.

In reshaping Marxist ideology, Ngugi wa Thiongo presents the insights in poor theory to interpret the troubles of post-colonialism and

neo-colonialism. He explains that the word *poor* is not used in the sense of appertaining poverty, for even in a critical theory, one does not want to give dignity to poverty by according it theory, but rather to accord dignity to the poor as they fight poverty, including poverty of theory. Poor, no matter the context of its use, implies the barest. Nothing could be barer than a grain of sand, and yet William Blake could talk of seeing the world in a grain of sand, seeing eternity in an hour. Without the luxury of excess, the poor do the most with the least. Poor theory and its practice imply maximising the possibilities inherent in the minimum (Wa Thiong'o, 2012, p. 2). The message for the proletarians and any poor formation whatsoever is that they can always maximise their very limited resources for survival. However, there is a way the resources can be so sparse that there would be nothing to maximise. Soldier 4 in *Embers* laments: 'I am only doing the job for the money. The pay is small... I despise the profession every day.' For this underpaid proletarian, there is practically nothing to maximise because what he gets is a slaving wage, not a living wage. For the most part, the jobs are not even there. With a GDP growth rate of -13.9%, GDP annual growth of 0.51%, unemployment of 33.3%, Nigeria is currently in its worst stagflation.

To digress a little more, the rethinking of Marxism has been done appreciably well by scholars of South Asia extraction. In what they tagged Subaltern Studies Collective, a body of thoughts that ruminate on the revolutionary prospects of the proletarians and every *othered* human being, including sexual minorities and minoritised groups across the world, these scholars have reformulated the *proletarian* construct in a more elastic term, the *subaltern*. Though the collective is largely taken to border on postcolonial studies, its themes, primarily agency and resistance, reconstruct the praxis of Cole's revolutionary dialectics in *Embers*. Agency in critical and social theory is taken to mean the ability, capacity and freedom of an individual to make choices for her/his life and to carry

through with these choices within existing social structures (Nayar, 2015, p. 5). The most crucial choice the subaltern or the proletarian must make in this context is enduring resistance, and not the symbolic resistance (nativist behavioural patterns) which Guha advances, but persistent active resistance against oppression. But for the ruthless disposition of the Nigerian government to protest, this is what should have started in Nigeria with the #EndSARS protest of the proletarian Nigerian youth, which fell through. It is a more pragmatic praxis than the apocalypse which *Embers* presents. The apocalypse can hardly translate to a regeneration of the entire system. It is a simplistic corrective.

Cole advances in the praxis a unilateral revolutionary approach to salvaging the Nigerian situation, which is targeted towards the system's elite—a paradigm that resonates from Soyinka and Rotimi to Osofisan and Ahmed Yerima. The Marxist corrective formulation is dualistic as it bifurcates the Nigerian society into the socioeconomically advantaged class and the disadvantaged class. The latter must struggle to subsist in egalitarianism with the former. The simplistic paradigm drives the Nigerian society in a vicious cycle of tragedy that entrenches a short-lived quick-fix that only deteriorates the system the more.

As it is experiential reality, preceding regimes are always better than succeeding ones in Nigeria. Even if the onslaught of the elite succeeds, as it did in Egypt and the Arab Spring, it will institute a Messiah or some Messianic group, the 'revolutionary elite,' one constituted by the vanguard of the revolution which would take up power and slip into the frailty of human caprices. Omatseye (2020) remarks 'Movements and beautiful until they create what political philosophers call the revolutionary elite. We saw that with Robespierre, Danton, Abbe Sieyes and how the joy turned into turbulence' (web). Cole's praxis can enthrone the 'Camp officers who steal seven' out of the ten bags of rice taken to the IDP camp by government officials, and 'those in uniforms whose job is to [make the

people] safe ... but drag out the girls every night to have a fill of their lusty ....' (Cole, 2018, p. 20).

To drive the Nigerian society from the cul de sac of this praxis of revolutionary Marxism, contemporary Marxist thinkers should reconstruct *revolution* and *resistance*. Nigerian proletarians can indeed speak, but beyond speaking to the hegemonic socio-political group, it should speak to itself too. In speaking to itself, it would begin to acquire the right spirit of resistance and revolution. In other words, even as the subaltern resists the master, it should resist itself too in imbibing and inculcating ethical principles of honesty, equity, justice, probity, responsibility, responsiveness, sympathy, empathy, and other virtues. The proletarian can transubstantiate itself into the antithetical personality of the ignoble bourgeois and massively reduplicate itself by mass education. This is when progressive revolution can occur because people of rectitude that will re-write Nigerian statutory instruments and implement them will emerge. This vision, with time, is feasible because there are examples of its manifestations in the West. The Nigerian democratic ethos can be reinvigorated to the wholesomeness in which justice and equity are uncompromising standards. By then, the greed that has perpetually made the commonwealths' distribution to be at gross disequilibrium will give way to true *federalist* distribution – a kind which William Shakespeare says 'undo excess'.

Conclusion

This paper situates Cole's *Embers* within the tradition of postcolonial Nigerian drama's Marxist writing. The play is read materially as a prognostication of the EndSARS protest. The focus of this study has been to problematise the play's revolutionary Marxist praxis—the destruction and disestablishment of the incumbent political and socio-economic elite. The revolutionary paradigm traps the Nigerian society in a vicious cycle whereby it progresses in retrogression because of the dearth of humanistic character content requisite for the desired change of the status quo in

succeeding political actors. Even though Cole asseverates the protasis ['The poor robs the poor too!'], he falters in the apodosis, which should, at the least, adumbrate the imperative of the systemic and methodological overhauling of the Nigerian personality, without any discriminatory profiling. In other words, even after Cole has posited that it is not only the haves that take from the have-nots but that the latter rape themselves, he proffers a one-sided simplistic redress. To this end, the play only evinces the frustration of Nigerians and does little to provide a pragmatic panacea for Nigeria's current situation.

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Editor's Essay: Mapping New Routes in Nigeria's Contemporary Feminist Activisms

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Introduction

Protests and movements over the years have been vital instruments in the hands of the people of a state in several agitations, especially in terms of social change. The social construct of the "*vox populi*" points to the implied power in the voices of the ruled over the ruler, suggesting narratives of strength in numbers that come with one voice. A new turn has been taken in contemporary feminist struggles as particular focus has been placed on structures of oppression and the need to create a new world order where women's emancipation goes hand in hand with the socialist idea of economic justice that has been the driving force of post-colonial feminist struggles. However, as the terrain of gender justice and feminist organising continues to evolve rapidly, there are many contradictory ways in which feminist activism and feminist research connect. Interestingly these points of intersectionality begin to give up understandings of how patriarchy intersects with male supremacy, capitalism, race, ethnicity, caste, and religious systems; and then shows a distinct dichotomy in the understanding of activisms and scholarship.

Contemporary feminist organising as far as Nigeria is concerned has, however, seen a distinct boost in activism over the last 10 years. The incidence of intersectionality in contemporary feminist movements, where

contemporary in this sense would be looking over the last 20 years, has engineered a finer, more sophisticated thrust in feminist organising. 21st-century feminist campaigns have found expressions in the resurgence of female comedy, music, theatre, art showcasing female cultural talent with female-centric awards in all spheres of cultural and artistic expressions. These expressions have curated an avenue through which women can speak their truths in silent disruptions through art, music, culture and even emerging areas of technology. This new dimension has given voice to silence in topical issues facing women and marginalised minorities across the world.

The KUJUA Workshop Plenary Session with Fakhriyyah Hashim

Upon the above premise, the KUJUA contributors' workshop, as part of its mandate, engaged a plenary session with Fakhriyyah Hashim, one of the co-founders of the Feminist Coalition (FemCo), the feminist collective which was one of the major rallying and funding forces of Nigeria's EndSars movement. The intent of the workshop was to provide a platform for journal contributors and faculty members of IAS and IFRA-Nigeria to be in conversation with one another to ask broad-reaching questions on the theme, social movements and protest actions in Africa, with participants drawn from a cohort of researchers, students and activists and faculty members.

During the panel titled *A New Wave of Nigerian Feminist Activism: Issues, Mobilisation and Resistance* led by Fakhriyyah Hashim and Dr Sharon Omotoso of the Institute of African Studies, Miss Hashim talked extensively on the role of the Feminist Coalition, especially with relation to mass coordinated protests against human right violations. Again, as mentioned above feminist activism has acquired a particular level of sophistication in in the middle-class privilege of its members and its manoeuvrings where its members are selectively chosen and well informed as to the particular needs of the struggle. The inherent competence of these

women was able to traverse the unique needs of the coalition. Hence women were able to channel their professionalism and skill set in Law, Tech, Art, Photography and Journalism to aid the cause of the movement. These privileges also offered avenues for the campaign for human rights, particularly highlighting women and queer rights.

Hashim's explanation of the Northern predicament as obviously exposed by the Violence Against Persons Act (VAPA) 2015 where she expressly criticised the laws stating them to be "grossly inefficient", especially within the Northern/Islamic narrative, further expressing towards the act of legislators regarding Sharia Law Narratives "you cannot criminalise beating wives or the age of consent". When asked about funding lobbyists, especially in terms of getting policies to be implemented at the national level, Miss Hashim asserted that minimal support is given due to the inefficacy of these "personal" laws passed, especially at the federal level. However, the attempt made towards decentralising feminist activism to cover all narratives within the Nigerian context is easily seen. Furthermore, according to Miss Hashim, there seems to be a recurring theme that even the decentralisation is not so straightforward and often becomes politicised and manipulated into Northern and Southern struggles.

Intersectionality in feminist organising then becomes a two-pronged fork where on the one hand is the intersections of global capitalism, race and class and on the other hand in the intersection of expressions in feminist organising, especially in becoming intergenerational. Here, the internal struggle in FemCo is largely seen with interplays of age politics and a culture of respectability even though the idea of elitism in feminist narratives includes women at all levels, which defines (Crenshaw, 1991) theory on the political, structural and representational forms of intersectionality. Where these expressions may have taken an engaging turn in the better half of the century and feminists have taken advantage of the

digital space as a public space (OXFAM, 2020), the assurance of safe online spaces that cut across state boundaries and connects women, could act as a potential tool for scuttling progress that has been made. This unique space afforded by the 21st century in digital communications, currency and online access has created forums upon which women can pass information, create organising and protests without physical contact

This space coined as networked feminism covers all possible definitions of what feminist movements may entail. It harnesses the potential of social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, and others as a catalyst in promoting feminist equality and, in response to sexism, has become a major engine for contemporary feminist movements (V. Valenti & C.E Martin, 2012). The Feminist Coalition and its activities, especially on Twitter, went a long way towards helping victims of police brutality during the #EndSARS protest and Miss Hashim, when asked, asserted that although members of the Coalition had to put in some level of financial strength, major funding was gotten from sponsors home and abroad who gave to the cause propagated by the Coalition.

Consequently, one can agree with (Moghadam 2013) upon the assertion that contemporary feminist activisms have begun to take up transnational flavours that get involved whether the mobilizing concern was economic justice, religious fundamentalism or conflicts and war. Hence, this level of transnational feminist activism can be used to forge a collective identity among women and improve the condition of women all around the world (V. Sperling, M.M Ferree, and B. Risman., 2001).

A Feminist Collective?

Although this supposition holds true in the long run, the idea of a feminist collective, inherent in the Feminist Coalition despite its implication of a collective/hive mind, cannot be said to represent all women or all peoples due to the unique terrain of marginalisation in Nigeria. It would be fair then to regard the coalition as a consciousness awakened and stirred in

reflex to their negotiations within their spaces as women, queer or otherwise and a need to leave a legacy within their own intersectional political space. Particular issues raised by Miss Fakhriyyah Hashim include the Nigerian Northern-centric social movement #ArewaMeToo that engaged the marginalisation of the sufferings of northern women because of the prevalence of religion within their spaces. Here, Nigerian feminists are not isolated in their struggles as feminist movements worldwide, contemporary or not, have struggled with these subtle levels of canonizations. These internal struggles are major issues, especially in the wake of women's emancipation.

Aided innumerably by networked feminism, feminist movements, especially during the #ENDSARS protest, were able to use the digital spaces to not only connect to protesters by giving free legal aid and support to those that were arrested but also to pool and provide funding for protesters and protest activities. Their ability to reach out offering peculiar solutions in helpless situations including but not limited to pro-bono legal services engendered a certain level of trust especially during the #EndSARS protest. The subtle, nuanced nature of the "help" narrative within the Feminist Coalition also bridged generational and classist gaps to a large extent, especially with the aid of network feminist activities.

Conversely, in rounding off the sessions, Dr Sharon Omotoso, a senior research fellow and a gender scholar, raised issues stating that although these feminist agitations have over time created a cornucopia of social disruptions that have led to Suffrage rights for women, self-determination and body autonomy, sexual and reproductive health rights, property rights, equal wages and access to health benefits and more, the key points for activism is proper documentation and collaboration stating expressly that there is need to "put pen to paper" and for women to work together. She raised key points there is a need to understand the level of

male participation in feminist activism, mentorship, the politics and economy of protests, counter protests and hijacking protests, the harnessing of media on information and disinformation, and the philosophies of solidarity. This further proves the supposition that the negotiations of the members of the Feminist Coalition are products of their intersectional politics, and they may not necessarily represent the ideals of activism within other spaces and even in scholarship.

However, it is important to understand that activism in its contemporary forms of contention carries a certain level of disruption that has a more indirect logic (Tarrow, 1998). While sitting, standing, or moving together aggressively in public space, demonstrators signal their identity and reinforce their solidarity. With the online space and ability to reach out across transnational lines, disruptions in the #ENDSARS movement obstructed the routine activities of governmental authorities and major stakeholders, especially around Lekki Toll Gate and forced the government to listen and attend to protesters' demands.

Conclusion?

The unique dialogue between FemCo's activism and scholarship has opened up spaces to interrogate the agency of FemCo within the #EndSARS movement. It raises pertinent questions about if the movement in itself was a feminist movement. To what extent is the struggle for Human Rights respected as such? How human is a queer person in Nigeria, and how might far can the fight for queer rights be pushed within Nigeria's cishetero-patriarchy? Finally, with the rallying faces of FemCo, Rinu Oduala and Aisha Yesufu as the central forces of the #EndSARS movement, what are the implications for future movements and activisms? How do we then situate the #EndSARS movement within Nigeria's patriarchy since it carries such distinct feminist features?

Although this cannot yet be a concluded inquiry, it is clear that there is still a long way to go. However, one thing remains unflappable and that

is that feminist activism, especially in Nigeria, has begun to carve for itself a new, nuanced multi-levelled identity, especially in the wake of organising like the Feminist Coalition that promises richer discourses in scholarship and better disruptions in activism.

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